

NEW YORK

JUNE 29-JULY 12, 2015

"Jail has a smell.
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People on the
outside could
never understand."

p.26

Rikers,

By the People
Who Live It



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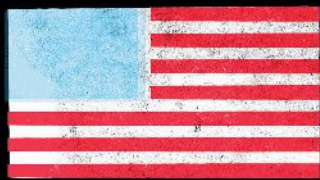
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PHOTOGRAPHS: DINA LITOVSKY FOR NEW YORK MAGAZINE; BOBBY DOHERTY/NEW YORK MAGAZINE; PATRICK MCMULLAN; BOBBY DOHERTY/NEW YORK MAGAZINE

WHEN SUZANNE WANTED A BABY AFTER CERVICAL CANCER, SCIENCE DELIVERED.

Diagnosed with an aggressive form of cervical cancer, Suzanne Kane's initial outlook wasn't good. Then she came to MSK, where Dr. Mario Leitao gave her several options to consider with her soon-to-be husband, Jimmi. Throughout surgery, chemotherapy and radiation, Suzanne's care team was intent on not only helping her survive, but allowing her to grow her family. Then, thanks to egg preservation and the help of a surrogate, Suzanne and Jimmi welcomed their new baby, named Aria.

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Comments



1 Honeybees are dying of stress, as David Wallace-Wells described in last week's cover story ("The Blight of the Honeybee," June 15–29). The feature left readers justifiably concerned. "Really interesting, scary read on how the death of bees are threatening our food systems," tweeted Megan Anderle. "I am now worried about bees going extinct," agreed @afzalALMIGHTY. Twitter user Michael DeAloia thought the piece brought to light an odd juxtaposition. "**We live in the Age of Abundance and the Age of Extinction,**" he tweeted. "How can this be? Jarring." Other readers focused on the connection between bee colony collapse and pesticides: "The only mystery about honeybee deaths is who and how much the pesticide industry is paying to keep it a mystery," tweeted the novelist Caleb Crain. Reader Noah G. Shannon agreed that the piece contained multitudes: "The NYMag story on bees is a great nesting doll," he wrote. "**Apocalyptic fervor, livestock anxiety, misleading data, ag conspiracy ...**" And many readers just expressed a newfound sense of camaraderie with the insects. "Bees are worrying themselves to death?" asked Eric Christensen. "I've found my spirit animal." "Bees," wrote Casey Johnston, "they're just like us."

2 During last year's Mississippi primary race between Senate Republican Thad Cochran and his tea-party challenger Chris McDaniel, four McDaniel supporters were arrested for their alleged involvement in a conspiracy to take photos of Cochran's wife, who was suffering from dementia and residing in a nursing home, as part of an effort to expose Cochran's rumored affair with his assistant. One of the arrested, a lawyer named Mark Mayfield, committed suicide soon after.

Marin Cogan's story about the race and its aftermath ("Ugly," June 15–29) had readers debating the boundaries of ethical campaigning. "The intensity of the arrests seemed absurd," wrote commenter Pippenpippen. "But these people lost touch with reality and with humanity. What were they thinking? How could they even consider this sort of intrusion into a sick old lady's life—making sport of her illness that way. Just to 'get' a political opponent? ... [Mayfield] should not have been ruined. But he should never have even considered this either. This just goes to show how this sort of wild political hostility overtakes basic humanity." Commenter Helzapoppn agreed: "**Why anyone felt they needed an image of Rose Cochran as evidence of adultery conducted by two people in their mid-70s,** or how they expected to translate that into votes for Chris McDaniel remains a head-scratcher. Guess this is what happens when the appearance of morality—upholding a reputation as a 'Christian' champion of 'traditional family values'—transcends real issues that should matter to Mississippians." Author Lawrence Serewicz saw a larger message in the saga: "Politics is a brutal business," he tweeted. "We have escaped political assassinations, but politics still kills people."

3 Pat Jordan's profile of disgraced referee and successful sports gambler Tim Donaghy raised the hackles of both sports fans and professional gamblers ("Does This Ex-Con Know the NBA Better Than LeBron?," June 15–29). "We learned two things from the *New York* profile," wrote Complex Sports' Chris Yuscavage. "One: Donaghy seems to be making a lot of money these days thanks to his close ties to gambling (just don't tell the IRS ... or his ex-wife), and two, Donaghy may or may

not be a pathological liar who doesn't tell the truth about anything." Jon Campbell of the betting site Covers took particular offense at the portrayal of sports gamblers in the story. "Jordan says that because Donaghy is successful '60 percent of the time' ... and that 'means that in the world of sports gambling, the name Tim Donaghy is gold. In the real world, that name is mud.' Wtf? I don't know anyone in the sports betting world who'd say Donaghy is the 'golden boy' of our industry, as the article's headline suggests," Campbell wrote. "If anything, the sports betting world is less forgiving of what Donaghy did as an NBA ref than those in the so-called real world. Sports bettors want a fair shake on the game more than anyone because their hard-earned money is on the line, not just fan pride that tends to fade with time. **The statement makes it sound like sports bettors are a bunch of unshaven dudes who don leather jackets in the summertime and are missing two fingers and walk with a limp.** It's such an archaic stereotype ... Bettors know the sports gambling world and the 'real world' are one and the same." The staff of ThePostGame.com was more sympathetic of Donaghy. "Donaghy does sound like a money-hungry sociopath bent on wealth accumulation," wrote the site's editors. "But the premise of his very successful handicapping service does prove he at least knows something about the NBA game—and how referees are influencing the results, whether they're involved on the gambling side or not." "This guy's got some terrific insights about how the NBA wants refs to call games," agreed commenter Cash23. "That said, no way would I ever trust that man with anything."

➔ Send correspondence to comments@nymag.com. Or go to nymag.com to respond to individual stories.

4:25 PM

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Intelligencer

INSIDE: Gayle King never sleeps / Katie Nolan at bat / Scalia goes down shouting



The National Interest: Jonathan Chait

Not Since the '60s
It may not be an
overstatement to say we
are living through a
genuine social revolution.

THE SUPREME COURT'S DECISION affirming marriage equality hastened what was already a fait accompli: Popular opinion has embraced the equal right to marriage at such a brisk clip that it was bound to spread to the deepest-red precincts of America within a generation or two. The decision was also the latest signpost of an important structural change that will define the current era in American life. The United States is undergoing a period of social transformation as profound and rapid as any it has seen since the 1960s. The revolution—it may not be too strong a term—has been driven by elected officials and judges and the broader culture, the strands all reinforcing one another.

Consider, first, the pace of change on just this issue. In 2004, George W. Bush used state-level ballot initiatives opposing same-sex marriage as part of his get-out-the-vote strategy. In 2008, when Barack Obama ran for president, he found it necessary to disavow support for marriage equality. By 2012, he was

able to make his support public. In 2016, it's unlikely that even the Republican candidate will openly oppose it, perhaps retreating to the defense of the odd florist or baker who refuses to sell flowers or cake to a same-sex couple. That the conservative resistance to same-sex marriage has been left to a handful of oddball characters reveals how the formerly majority position has been reduced to the counterculture fringe.

This transmutation was very much on the mind of Antonin Scalia, whose dissent conveyed an anger far broader than one decision, even as momentous as this one, could bear. Scalia registered his dissent not from a single judicial conclusion but from an entire historical epoch. He raged at the coastal court ("a select, patrician, highly unrepresentative panel of nine") imposing its values on large segments of helpless, unrepresented flyover country. It is notable that Scalia's argument contained the seeds of its own intellectual capitulation by embracing the anti-elite logic of affirmative action. He insisted not only that more socially diverse bodies have advantages but also—carrying the logic even farther than most affirmative-action defenders—that decisions by socially unrepresentative bodies are completely illegitimate ("no social transformation without representation," in his remarkably broad formulation). Scalia likewise scoffed at the premise that access to marriage amounts to freedom at all, snarking, "Ask the nearest hippie."

The hippie is a symbol of the 1960s and one of the few remaining safe targets for the reactionary angst against that era that has animated conservatives in the intervening decades. As it happens, the '60s offer the best available parallel to the changes sweeping through American culture and politics. That period saw an intense expansion of activist government in the economic sphere, just as the current one has (Obamacare, stronger regulation of Wall Street and greenhouse-gas emissions). Then as now, judges created new rights, and legislatures created others. Then as now, new attitudes spread organically through the culture. Birth-control pills, drugs, rock music; the liberal Warren and Burger courts; the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act. All these things flowed out of and into the same stream, a strong sense that individual autonomy had to expand.

A similar process is under way now, and a great deal has happened in a very short time. America elected its first black president and may well follow that by electing its first female one. Obama appointed two women to the Supreme Court, including the first Latina; ended the ban on open homosexuality in the military; and carefully nudged along the groundswell of support for marriage equality. This made space for government and businesses to recognize transgender rights and for transgender icons like Laverne Cox and Caitlyn Jenner to emerge. Feminist reforms in the home and workplace, driven by figures like Sheryl Sandberg and Tina Fey, have gained renewed momentum. Youth culture has anathematized bullying and accorded pride of place to nerd culture. Social autonomy has sprung forward on almost every front.

These changes have gained impetus from smartphones and social media, which have aided a sense of social self-representation. Cities across America, working with the Department of Justice, have begun undertaking police reforms, all driven by the near-universal access to handheld video recording, which has subjected officers to a

once-unimaginable accountability. There is an illiberal edge to these changes: Political correctness is what happens when the left dominates a subculture to the point of rendering any disagreement impossible. But the overall thrust of the transformation is to expand rather than to contract individual autonomy and self-expression.

And where old horrors recur, they are greeted in new ways. A few years ago, North Charleston police officer Michael Slager would have been a local hero who fired his weapon in self-defense. Now he faces prosecution for cold-blooded murder in front of the whole country. A half-century ago, racist murderers like Dylann Roof operated with broad social sanction or even with the cooperation of the law. Crimes such as his may continue to occur, but they exist in a completely different social context.

The swift reconsideration of Confederate symbolism in the wake of the Charleston shooting illustrates all this as neatly as the gay-marriage ruling. The movement runs wide and deep; it involves Walmart's retail decisions (shedding its identification with red America) and the governor of Alabama's removal of Confederate flags on the capitol's grounds. The movement encompasses a mix of business logic—an association with backward thinking prevents states from competing for economic talent—and apparently heartfelt realizations, like the statement by South Carolina representative Mick Mulvaney. "I blame myself for not listening closely enough to people who see the flag differently than I do," he said. "It is a poor reflection on me that it took the violent death of my former desk mate in the S.C. Senate, and eight others of the best the Charleston community had to offer, to open my eyes to that."

The backlash against the Confederate battle flag reflects the sudden shock at a spate of horrific murders. But it is also the slowly ripening fruit of a deep rethinking of American history and identity in which Obama has played a leading role. He has refined versions of that story throughout his career, perhaps most famously in his star-making 2004 Democratic National Convention keynote speech. As Greg Jaffe recently reported, Obama considers his speech this past March in Selma, Alabama, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the march on the Edmund Pettus Bridge, its most articulate and fully developed version. In that speech, Obama called the march "a contest to determine the true meaning of America" and declared that "the idea of a just America and a fair America, an inclusive America, and a generous America—that idea ultimately triumphed."

Obama's conception of Americanness does not merely allow marginalized members of society to participate but makes their participation the quintessence of Americanism. As he did again during his Charleston eulogy, Obama has placed the African-American struggle for equality at the center of the struggle for social justice, and the struggle for social justice at the center of what America means.

Periods of historical momentum such as the current one do not last forever; they breed backlash. But the progress they usher in may very well last forever. The United States will never go back to the days when a person born gay could not hope to enjoy marriage. It will never go back to thinking of a president who is not white or male as abnormal. The country as it existed as recently as a decade ago is receding permanently into the mists of time. ■

Arc of History

"Progress on this journey often comes in small increments. Sometimes two steps forward, one step back. And then sometimes there are days like this, when that slow, steady effort is rewarded with justice that arrives like a thunderbolt."

PRESIDENT OBAMA, after the Supreme Court's gay-marriage ruling.

"Removing the flag from this state's capitol would not be an act of political correctness. It would be one step in an honest accounting of America's history. It would be an expression of the amazing changes that have transformed this state and the country for the better."

PRESIDENT OBAMA, that afternoon at the Charleston funeral of the Reverend Clementa Pinckney.



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Life in Pictures: Gayle King

Two big jobs, five outfits, an army's worth of Spanx, and one very long average day.

Interview by Rebecca Milzoff

“LIKE EVERYBODY, you juggle, and you work it out,” says Gayle King, co-host of *CBS This Morning* with Charlie Rose and editor-at-large of *O: The Oprah Magazine*, about the 18-to-20-hour workdays she often puts in. “I don’t get enough sleep—I wear the Jawbone Up band to tell me, and last night I got three hours and 43 minutes. But don’t cry for me, because I love my job and I love my life. Sometimes you drop a ball, but you pick it up and keep going.”

AGE: 60

FOLLOWED ON: June 10



In the makeup chair, 5:23 am:
“The transformation begins! I’m so used to [being made up] that I don’t even notice it, believe it or not. It’s almost like brushing your teeth—except I brush my own teeth.”

Life in Pictures: Gayle King



→ **4:43 am** I have my bag that has all my paperwork in it, and then the other with shoes and **body shapers in all different sizes depending on how I'm feeling that day.** The car picks me up between 4:30 and 4:45.



11:17 am You know, I first got glasses in sixth grade and hated it. And now they're a great accessory! I'm a big Warby Parker girl, but I get them from all over—I **bought some bootleg eyeglasses in China, bazaar glasses.**



2:22 pm Ivanka Trump was on the panel, and rather than showcase one of her pairs, **I went with both, as a wink to her.** I made a point of telling everyone, but as I was walking out, people were like, "Gayle? You know you have ..."



6:16 am We have a big notebook where I track what I wear—the colors, the styles, accessories. **I love a good sheath dress, and I love color—yellow is my favorite.** The portrait? A guy who does craft services painted it for me!



12:07 pm I'm at *O* every day. The two jobs don't bleed together: CBS is live, and at the magazine, we're three months out. But there are times I'll say, **"We're doing this great story in the magazine; we should do it for CBS."**



2:30 pm That's Sara Blakely of Spanx on the right. I remember meeting her on *Oprah* years ago, so I'm thrilled for her success. **I wear Spanx every day** anyway, but she did give everyone there her new Trust Your Thinstincts.



8:20 am I knew Charlie before the show, but I didn't know-know him. Now I invite myself over to his place. We watched the *Breaking Bad* finale together, and I came with a camera to do selfies. He was like, *What are you doing?*



11:12 am When we go off the air at 10:30, we have a postmortem and look ahead, and planning starts. We talk to bureaus in Washington, London, and L.A.—who's going where, how things will be handled.



1:38 pm Off to the *Forbes Women's Summit*: I was interviewing the CEO of Rent the Runway, and changed into one of their dresses, and I was doing last-minute prep in the car. **The flip phone? Listen, I like it.** You can take it anywhere.



2:05 pm A very rushed elevator meal: I'm not hungry at 3:30 in the morning; I can have a little bit of fruit and then wait till lunch. I passed on dessert—I'm trying to save some eating room for vacation in July.



4:53 pm Back at O for a fashion run-through: I put on green, because I have this bad habit of touching my face when I'm wearing makeup and then touching my dress, so **the yellow was in bad shape.**



7:16 pm At a Princess Grace Foundation screening of *Rear Window*: I didn't make the after-party—**my homework's delivered between 7:30 and 8.** I don't go to bed till 10 or 11. If I go to bed too early, I wake up at 1.



155 MINUTES WITH ...

Katie Nolan

The mouthy, funny Fox Sports 1 host takes a few whacks at Chelsea Piers softballs and meathead fans.

BY JESSICA ROY

KATIE NOLAN IS standing in a narrow cage at Chelsea Piers, holding an aluminum bat. Her long hair is tucked into a ratty helmet, and she's wearing a *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* shirt. A pitching machine is set at 40 miles per hour, and softballs are whizzing by inches from her nose. I'm trying to cheer her on above the whirl of the machine, but as it turns out, Nolan doesn't need encouragement. The Fox


Sports 1 host played softball as a kid, and she makes solid contact with practically every pitch. "This is so fun," she exclaims. "It's totally reawakening my love of softball." I'm supposed to hit, too, but I've worn open-toe shoes, and a Chelsea Piers employee is hesitant about letting me enter the batting cage.

Nolan has taken a break from shooting her weekly sports-comedy show, *Garbage Time*, to swing a bat with me. It's a big day in the sports-media world:



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A few hours earlier, ESPN announced it would not renew the contract of columnist and Grantland founder Bill Simmons. The news is a shock to Nolan, who knows Simmons well, and when we got here a moment ago, she fired off a text to make sure he was okay. “He does such a good job of curating smart-ass voices,” Nolan says. She smiles. “And I don’t just say that because he tried to hire me.”

Four years ago, Nolan was a 23-year-old Hofstra grad, bartending at night and living in her grandmother’s condo in Massachusetts; now she is a writer and producer, and the host, of *Garbage Time*, a show roughly in the *Jon Stewart* format that airs Sunday nights on Fox Sports 1. It’s not a show full of stats, though she knows her stuff. Instead, it’s about jokes and tone and, most of all, irreverence. The moment that may have established her was an episode in April, when she did a whole segment about a web post titled “How to Land a Husband at the Masters,” which had appeared on Fox Sports’ own site. She tore it apart with lines like “It is very easy to try to type cosmopolitan.com and accidentally type foxsports.com, if you just got your nails done.”

Off the air, Nolan curses a lot and laughs loudly. On Twitter, where she’s the least filtered, she calls out trolls and speaks her mind. More important, she is not afraid to be the “bitch on a rampage,” as she puts it, in order to make *Garbage Time* better. “I already do a lot of stuff that I don’t think the male-dominated sports world is really a huge fan of, and I try to sneak it in,” she says. “It’s sort of like when you’re arguing with an idiot—not to call men idiots—and you have to make them think something was their idea? I do a lot of that.” Even, sometimes, with her bosses: “It can either be the show they want or the show you want, and you have to fight,” Nolan says. “And it’s a lot of fighting.”

Nolan wasn’t always so emboldened. Growing up in Framingham, near Boston, she was shy, with a bad short haircut “from first grade until freshman year of high school,” she says. “I was horrid-looking. And middle school is like the comments section IRL.” She briefly played hockey as a kid, and when the coach mistook her gender because of her short hair, she was too afraid to correct him. She dutifully completed the season as a boy named Kyle. “I went by Kyle, and I made friends on the team as Kyle,” she says. “It went on for a pretty long time, until I went to a birthday party in a dress and all the hockey players were like ... *Kyle?*”

While bartending in Massachusetts after college, Nolan decided to start a blog called *Bitches Can’t Hang*, which got her noticed

by the men’s-lifestyle website *Guyism*. She made videos for them before moving to Fox Sports 1, first as a social-media correspondent on the panel show *Crowd Goes Wild*, then with a web-video series called *No Filter* that she hosted until the debut of *Garbage Time* in March. Despite Fox Sports 1’s struggles, the show has been a success, primarily owing to Nolan’s skewering of pro athletes and the institutions that coddle them; one episode in mid-April pulled in more than 1.6 million viewers.

Soon, we move to the medium-pitch machine, where the softballs come in at 60 miles per hour. After agreeing not to sue Chelsea Piers should my feet be permanently mangled, I take a turn at the plate, as Nolan cheers me on. As I miss or foul off pitch after pitch, she shouts, “You got this!” politely pretending that we are operating on the same skill level. When she takes the bat, Nolan misses one pitch—the first—but after that she’s slugging left and right.

Like any woman with a little bit of fame—especially one in a mostly male field—Nolan has attracted her share of haters. They flock to her social-media profiles to say she knows nothing about sports, or that she only got her job because she’s hot, or that she’s given sexual favors to Fox executives. Unfortunately for the trolls, she owns them gleefully. “Boy, I sure hope some day I get better at hiding the fact that I’m ‘thirsty for the D’ during interviews with male guests,” she recently tweeted, referencing viewers who accused her of flirting with Giants wide receiver Odell Beckham Jr. “How embarrassing!” In December, she dedicated a segment of *No Filter* to reading aloud and

“When you’re arguing with an idiot ... and you have to make them think something was their idea? I do a lot of that.”

responding to some of the foulest commentary. “You still my favorite whore, Katie,” she reads to the camera, before responding, “You know, there are a lot of whores out there. I really appreciate the honor.”

After batting practice, we hop into an Uber and zip down the West Side Highway toward the studio where she tapes the show. She immediately strikes up a conversation with the driver, who is not so evolved. “Here’s a novel idea,” she offers, her voice dripping with sarcasm. “How about I go out and make the money and you stay home and take care of the kids?” The driver tentatively agrees to this idea, but only if her job is more lucrative than any he might take on. Their plan does have one snag, though: “I already have a wife,” he admits uneasily. After we arrive and climb out onto the street in West Soho, she jokes, “Man, he did not want to marry me.”

Garbage Time is shot at Embassy Row, a TV-production center that handles basicable shows like *Cutthroat Kitchen* and *Watch What Happens: Live*. As I’m waiting to sign in, she checks her phone and tilts it my way. Simmons has responded to her text. She opens the message and offers me the gist, something about how he’s doing fine and they’ll talk soon. “He’s more fun just to talk to than he is to follow [on Twitter],” she says. “On Twitter, it’s too much basketball.”

We head inside to her studio, tiny as a Manhattan bedroom, just down the hall from Bravo baron Andy Cohen’s office. They’re shooting Bravo’s *Fashion Queens* today, and it’s chaotic; stylists, interns, and cameramen flutter by in a flash of sequins. An assistant swoops in to unwrap a giant bowl of guacamole on the craft-services table. “This is the food we don’t get to eat,” Nolan jokes. Nearby, a *Fashion Queens* cast member breaks into spontaneous song. Nolan shoots mostly on Saturdays, when the office is much less hectic.

Garbage Time was guaranteed 20 episodes and is about three-quarters of the way through that run. Nolan has no idea whether it’ll be renewed or if she’ll be whisked away to a new project. (Fox Sports says a second season is in the works.) Ideally, she says, she’d like to do a show with a wider lens, perhaps something that mixes sports with pop culture. The tough part, she says, is shaking off the impostor syndrome. Her boyfriend is constantly challenging her to see herself as a successful TV anchor with a dedicated following. Nolan isn’t convinced. “If you become very aware of what you are now, you become Britt McHenry,” she jokes, referencing the ESPN reporter who was recently suspended for a week for berating a towing-company employee. “Which nobody wants to be.” ■



4.6


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Rhetoric: Jennifer Senior

The Dissenter
In defeat, Justice
Antonin Scalia is more
stinging, less poisonous.

IN SEPTEMBER 2013, I interviewed Antonin Scalia for this magazine. He spoke memorably of many things—his belief in the Devil in particular—but the line that remains with me these 21 months later, the one I remember with precise grammatical accuracy and the wistful tone in which it was spoken, is this, in which he refers to himself in the third person: “Maybe the world is spinning toward a wider acceptance of homosexual rights, and here’s Scalia, standing athwart it.”

The world is indeed spinning away from Scalia—not just on gay rights, which reached a new historic peak when the Supreme Court decided that gay men and women have a constitutional right to marry, but on the Affordable Care Act, too, which the Court upheld the day before, deciding that an unfortunate and inconsistent clause could not, in the



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context of a massive bill with interlocking and interdependent clauses, ruin the bill's clear intent.

One could say that the Court has shown itself recently to be very much of the world. Scalia, meanwhile, is already thinking about the next. "I have never been custodian of my legacy," he told me, when explaining his tenacious opposition to a constitutional right to gay marriage. "When I'm dead and gone, I'll either be sublimely happy or terribly unhappy."

Often Supreme Court justices mellow with age. Scalia has shown no sign of doing so. Being on the right side of history obviously does not concern him—he's willing to stand athwart it, as he says (one might even say it flatters his conception of himself)—and the more isolated he gets, the more extravagant his rhetoric becomes. The man is King Canute with a black robe and swan-feather quill, possibly the same one that signed the Constitution itself. His dissent called the gay-marriage decision a "judicial Putsch," and he warned of a constitutional crisis: "A system of government that makes the People subordinate to a committee of nine unelected lawyers does not deserve to be called a democracy."

Scalia may consider this moment a catastrophically political one. But it would be naïve to assume that Scalia's views on gay marriage (or Obamacare, which he derisively referred to as *scotuscare*) are any less political. He likes to imagine himself as a solitary voice of reason, jealously guarding the Constitution, unswayed by personal preference or the newfangled notions of the moment. But in truth, he does not approve of same-sex marriage, simple as that. "I still think it's Catholic teaching that it's wrong. Okay?" he told me in 2013. Had Scalia opposed Kennedy's logic on constitutional grounds alone, he could have done so; instead, he went a good deal further. Though he conceded states have a right to determine who can marry, he then added that the states that chose to do so were taking a risk: "Those civil consequences—and the public approval that conferring the name of marriage evidences—can perhaps have adverse social effects." (Adverse social effects on whom he did not specify.) He then added that gay marriage is less popular than meets the eye: "The electorates of 11 States, either directly or through their representatives, chose to expand the traditional definition of marriage. Many more decided not to." This is disingenuous, suggesting that popular opinion is against same-sex marriage. In fact, more Americans favor same-sex marriage

(57 percent, to be precise) than oppose it, and gay couples had been able, before Friday, to get married in 36 states. While it's true that many of these states were forced to permit this by judicial decision, those opinions often came from lower-level courts where judges found the same elusive constitutional right to marry that the Supreme Court found in its decision.

But most strikingly, Scalia described the Supreme Court just as a conservative-talk-radio host might—which is not all that surprising, really, given that he also told me he gets much of his news from talk radio. ("You know who my favorite is?" he said. "My good friend Bill Bennett.")

"The Federal Judiciary," he warned, "is hardly a cross-section of America. Take, for example, this Court, which consists of only nine men and women, all of them successful lawyers who studied at Harvard or Yale Law School. Four of the nine are natives of New York City. Eight of them grew up in east- and west-coast States. Only one hails from the vast expanse in-between. Not a single Southwesterner or even, to tell the truth, a genuine Westerner (California does not count). Not a single evangelical Christian

At another point in history, Scalia's words might have been downright terrifying. But now his rhetoric is inversely proportionate to its influence.

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(a group that comprises about one quarter of Americans), or even a Protestant of any denomination.”

In other words: A twee, out-of-touch group of Ivy League elites are now calling the shots in the United States. Be afraid. (Though one does wonder whether “California does not count” will climb right up there with Nabokov’s “picnic, lightning” as one of the greatest parentheticals of all time.)

Scalia’s opinions have always had the sting of industrial solvent, always been entertaining to read. But now he’s out-done himself, layering on his despair in brackets within parentheses; he invoked every conservative bugaboo he could, including hippies. (“One would think Freedom of Intimacy is abridged rather than expanded by marriage. Ask the nearest hippie.”)

At another point in history, Scalia’s words might have been downright terrifying. The fundamental bigotry in them would have seemed dangerous, and not uncommon. As Scalia himself wrote in *Lawrence v. Texas* in 2003, “Many Americans do not want persons who openly engage in homosexual conduct as partners in their business, as scout-masters for their children, as teachers in their children’s schools, or as boarders in their home. They view this as protecting themselves and their families from a lifestyle that they believe to be immoral and destructive.” But even then, Scalia was writing in dissent. What we were hearing from him was in fact the beginning of the final act of a long opera, Wagner’s Wotan howling with regret about having to set humanity free. Already, times were changing, inexorably and irrevocably. There was no going back.

Now Scalia’s words are only that, his rhetoric inversely proportionate to its influence. Scalia has lost the culture wars, and he knows as much. The most he can do is concoct vinegar-infused dissents, hoping the next generation of law students, whom he feels are his true audience anyway, will eagerly ingest them.

In the meantime, he must continue his day-to-day life with Justice Kennedy—whose writing he attacked even more vigorously than his jurisprudence, declaring that he’d sooner hide his head in a bag than join an opinion with such a lousy opening sentence—and then with gay Supreme Court employees who’ll suddenly begin to marry around him, and then the oncoming sea change from the Republican Party itself (58 percent of GOP millennials favor same-sex marriage, according to Pew), and then, finally, the great, spinning world. ■

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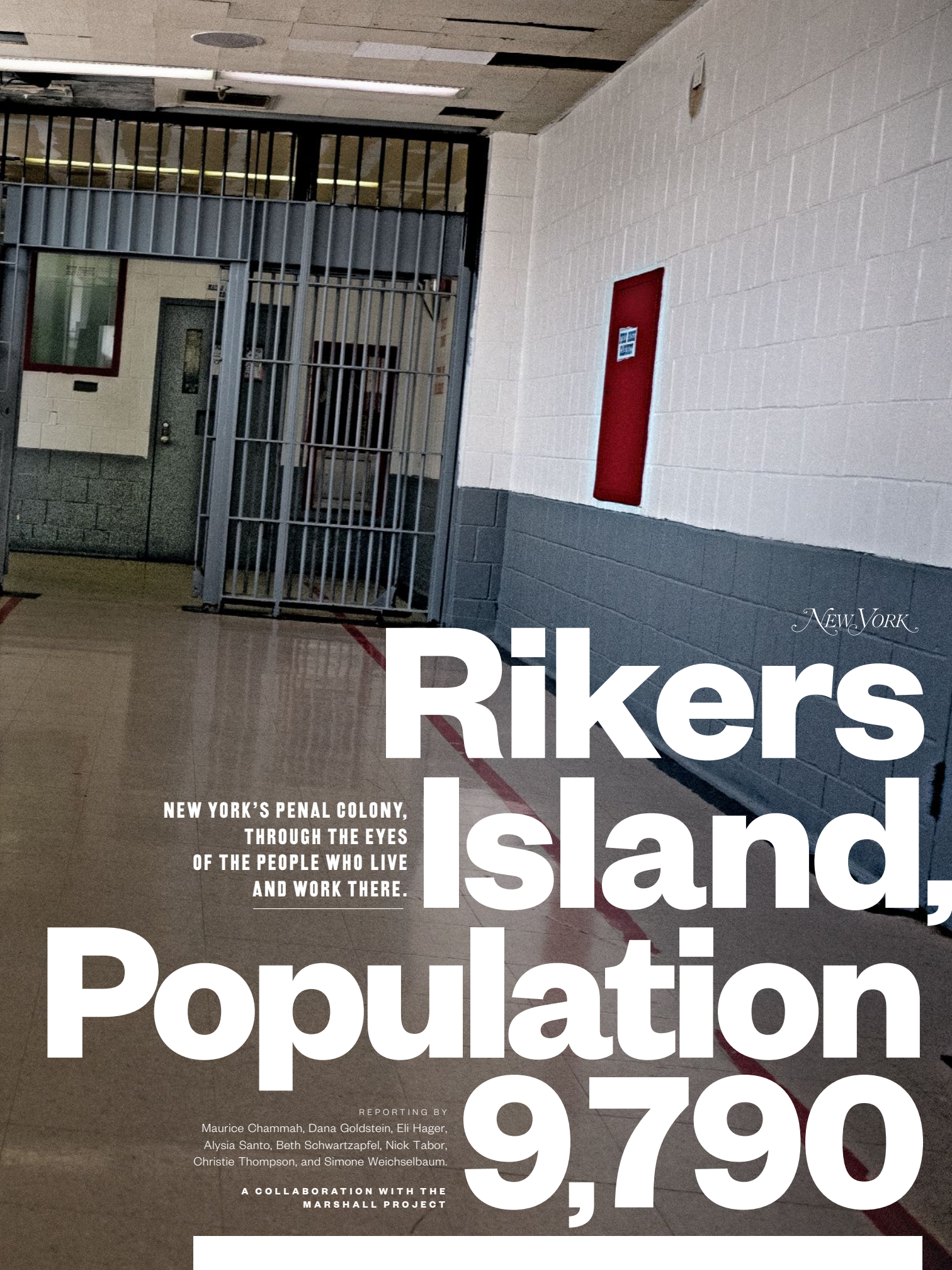
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On the way to solitary
confinement in the
notoriously violent
Otis Bantum
Correctional Center.





NEW YORK

NEW YORK'S PENAL COLONY,
THROUGH THE EYES
OF THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE
AND WORK THERE.

Rikers Island, Population 9,790

REPORTING BY

Maurice Chammah, Dana Goldstein, Eli Hager,
Alysia Santo, Beth Schwartzapfel, Nick Tabor,
Christie Thompson, and Simone Weichselbaum.

A COLLABORATION WITH THE
MARSHALL PROJECT

A

S LONG AS the City of New York has owned Rikers Island, since the 1880s, it has been a place for the unwanted. For a time, pigs were raised for slaughter there. Not long afterward, the island—conveniently but remotely located in the East River between the Bronx and Queens, not 300 feet from where La Guardia’s runways now sit—was converted to a partial landfill, full of horse manure and garbage. The odor repelled its neighbors in the boroughs, and the refuse attracted a sizable rat population, which the city tried to contain by releasing wild dogs. Instead, the dogs attacked and killed some of the pigs. It took poison gas to kill off the rodents. Next the city moved humans to Rikers.

The first jail on the island opened in 1935, meant to supplement and eventually replace the unimprovable disaster that was the Blackwell’s Island (now Roosevelt Island) jail, which *Time* had called, in an exposé, the “world’s worst.” But Rikers never had a pristine moment, even at the start. Before the facility opened, inspectors warned of health hazards occasioned by, among other things, “dump fires,” and the problems that had plagued Blackwell’s—drug use, corrupt correction officers, violence, squalor, gang consolidation—moved upriver almost immediately, and have stubbornly stayed ever since. Today, there are ten jails in total on Rikers, vast parking lots, infirmaries, a power plant, and a barge to combat overcrowding—a persistent difficulty in a facility that holds, on average, more than 9,700 prisoners and sometimes has to squeeze in more than 15,000. Adults and adolescents who are sentenced to less than a year’s time in New York City serve out their punishment on the island. (Those sentenced to longer than a year move upstate, to a state facility.)

Rikers has a kind of notoriety in the popular imagination: The city’s highest-profile defendants, from the Son of Sam to Dominique Strauss-Kahn to Bobby Shmurda, pass through in a cloud of gleeful *Post* headlines, but so do two-bit weed dealers and shoplifters and the resourceless mentally ill. As do violent criminals. But the vast majority of the island’s residents are very poor and awaiting trial for low-level offenses, unable to afford bail and stuck in a limbo that can last weeks or, thanks to delays in the court system, extend to several years. The crowded isolation of the island has resulted in a complex society with its own hierarchies, official and not. Gangs openly control certain dorms; correction officers are in constant battle—often literal—with their charges, but some of them form transactional relationships with them too, whether for sex or drugs or cigarettes. People are born on Rikers—there are 15 beds for babies adjacent to the women’s dorm—and they die there, too.

It is the deaths that have lately moved the gaze of New Yorkers back to Rikers, where we have been troubled to read stories like the one about a schizophrenic, diabetic inmate named Bradley Ballard who was locked alone in his cell for six days without medication, insulin, food, or running water; officers and health workers remarked on the smell coming from his cell, but no one got up to help him until he went into cardiac arrest, covered in his own feces and with a rubber band around his genitals that had caused sepsis to set in. Or the one about Victor Woods, who went into a violent

seizure while a guard sat watching him and drinking a cup of coffee. Or, just a few weeks ago, the news about 22-year-old Kalief Browder, accused of stealing a backpack; his three years on Rikers without a trial had been chronicled in *The New Yorker*. He hanged himself after he got out, as he’d tried to do while in jail. There were ten deaths last year alone, and stabbings and slashings have doubled since 2010. The *New York Times* has run an investigative series on the jail that has, among other things, exposed widespread abuse and violence by correction officers toward the mentally ill (of whom there are many in the jail).

Perhaps in response, the de Blasio administration has made reforming Rikers a priority. This April, the mayor announced his intention to tackle the court delays that are part of the reason the Rikers population is so bloated. He has brought in a new commissioner, Joseph Ponte, a reformer who had previously run the Maine state correction system. Ponte has ended solitary confinement for those under 18 and limited it to 30 days for adults. (By 2016, the Department of Correction promises, it will be banned for all inmates 21 and under.) The jail has added a small, 66-bed pilot program, opened in late 2013, that serves as an alternative to solitary confinement for the severely mentally ill. The mayor has also decided not to renew the jail’s contract with Corizon, its widely criticized medical provider. Meanwhile, Norman Seabrook, the powerful union boss of the Correction Officers’ Benevolent Association, is the subject of a corruption investigation by U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara. In June, the city settled a long-running class-action lawsuit brought by the Legal Aid Society and Bharara’s office concerning excessive use of force against inmates. Additional cameras will be installed, some officers will wear body cameras, new guidelines will be developed for identifying guards with a pattern of violence, and a federal monitor will be appointed.

And yet, despite all this—or maybe because of it, according to some people who don’t believe the current approach to reform is the correct one—inmate-on-correction-officer violence increased at the end of last year and in the early part of this year. Over the

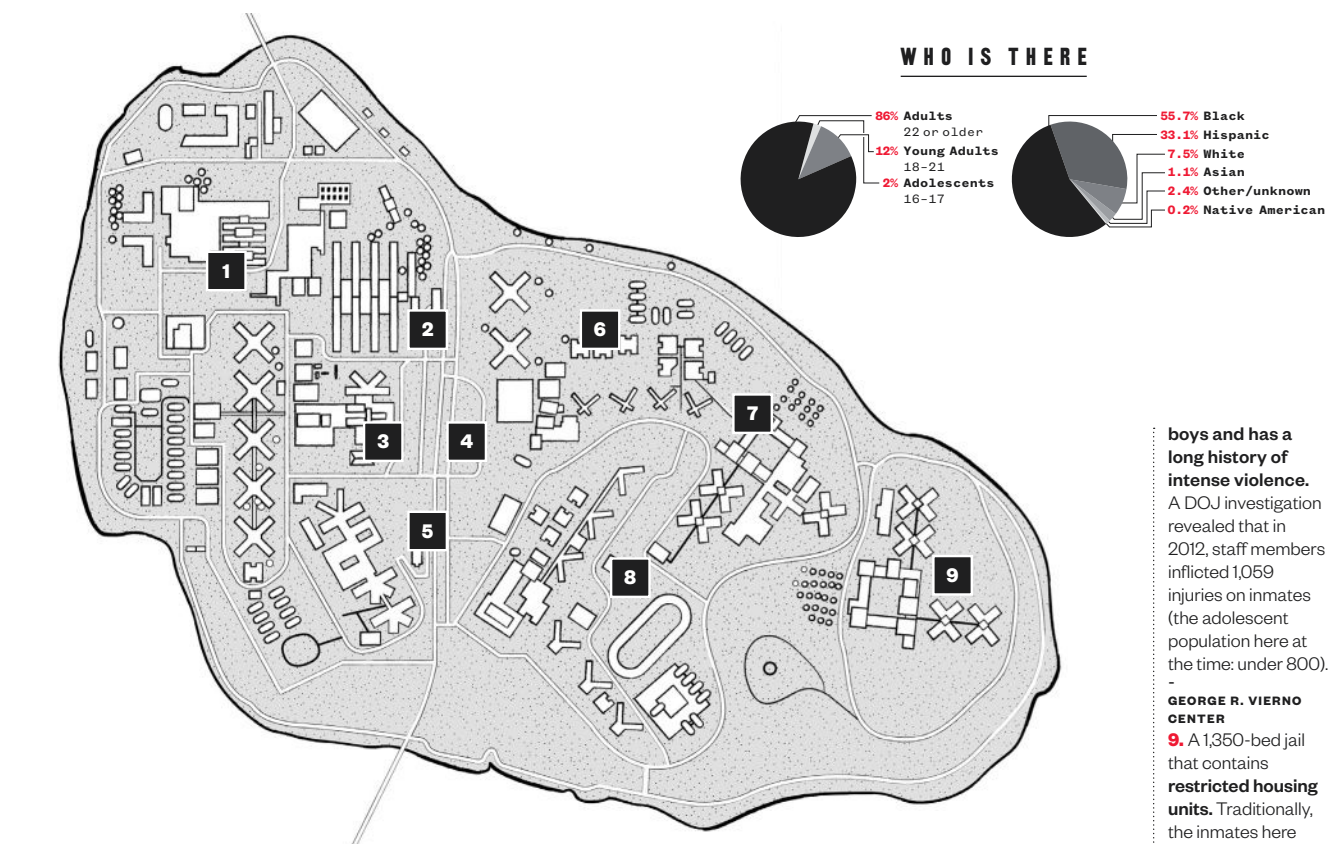
This report is a partnership between *New York* and **The Marshall Project**. The Marshall Project is a nonprofit news organization covering America’s criminal-justice system. An extended interview with Commissioner Joseph Ponte is available on themarshallproject.org. Additional photographs, including a guard’s own pictures and a history of Rikers Island jailbreaks can be found on nymag.com.

past four years, there has been an 1,800 percent increase in reported assaults on medical staff, suggesting either that something has fundamentally changed inside Rikers or, perhaps, that retaliation and bureaucratic self-protection are happening in the form of paperwork. Whatever the reality behind the stats, the violence goes both ways and is persistent: This isn't the first time a federal monitor has been appointed to address officer-on-inmate violence in response to a settlement; the same thing happened 15 years ago, resulting in a temporary improvement in Rikers culture that was quickly erased by budget cuts under the Bloomberg administration, which placed Rikers much farther down its list of priorities than has the current one.

Jails, in general, have problems that are quite distinct from those of prisons—many inmates aren't acclimated to institutional life yet, and rapid turnover makes things difficult, too—but the density of Rikers, a natural extension of New York's own density, presents a special dilemma. It's not that the difficulties that exist here don't

exist in other big-city jails, but they're all multiplied in Rikers, resulting in a harrowing case study of everything that ails the American criminal-justice system. Too many people and too little money to deal with them, essentially. Policy and atrocity make the headlines, but what is less understood from news reports is the culture that makes reforms so difficult.

"Jail has a smell," one correction officer told us. "I can't even describe it to you. Worse than a sewer. The island is its own island that people on the outside could never understand." Reporters spoke to dozens of people who spend, or recently spent, their days, in full or in part, on Rikers Island: officers, inmates, lawyers, volunteers, and the families of inmates. What follows are their experiences, in their words. What became clear from the interviews is that gangs, which have always been a problem at Rikers, are especially powerful now. Bloods dominate—but their members are so numerous that they, like other gangs, have begun to splinter, violently, into smaller subsets. Recent changes have been polarizing: Some correction



Rikers Island

Average length of stay:

57 days

New inmates a day: **211**

OTIS BANTUM CORRECTIONAL CENTER

1. The 1,647-bed unit contains the 400-bed unit for **punitive solitary confinement**

(known as the **bing**, and for being particularly violent), plus a new supermax unit where inmates have to be escorted wherever they go.

NORTH INFIRMARY COMMAND

2. Houses **sick inmates who aren't ill enough to be hospitalized**, with separate areas for people needing special protection (like those who have

cut ties with gangs) and inmates with HIV or AIDS-related conditions.

ANNA M. KROSS CENTER

3. Contains beds for 2,388 inmates in 40 units. Besides its **high concentration of mental-observation units and a center for inmates under treatment for drug detox**, it contains an experimental unit, where officials

now divert inmates who have serious mental illnesses when they violate the rules.

BENJAMIN WARD VISIT CENTER

4. Check-in for visitors to all ten jails.

ERIC M. TAYLOR CENTER

5. Generally known as the calmest jail, because it **houses inmates with short sentences**. It has 1,851 beds, mostly in dorm-style units.

GEORGE MOTCHAN DETENTION CENTER

6. 2,098 beds in 50 separate housing areas. This is where **18-to-21-year-old inmates** often go, grouped together in part for special young-adult programs (GED prep, cognitive therapy).

ROSE M. SINGER CENTER

7. Known as "Rosie's," it's the **only women's jail**. It has 1,139 beds and a

nursery for women who give birth at Rikers and those who qualify to have their newborns brought in after they're booked. (In recent years, more than half of applicants are denied, some because of prior behavior or substance-abuse issues.)

ROBERT N. DAVOREN CENTER

8. Contains all **16- and 17-year-old**

boys and has a long history of intense violence.

A DOJ investigation revealed that in 2012, staff members inflicted 1,059 injuries on inmates (the adolescent population here at the time: under 800).

GEORGE R. VIERNO CENTER

9. A 1,350-bed jail that contains **restricted housing units**. Traditionally, the inmates here start off spending 23 hours a day in their cells and earn more time outside through good behavior.

WHERE THEY ARE

- 1.** Officer Hope, p. 32.
- 2.** Miguel Mendoza, p. 38.
- 3.** Terri Scroggins, p. 34.
- 4.** Shaian Cabrera, p. 34.
- 5.** "Daniel," p. 119.
- 6.** Robert Eaddy, p. 33.
- 7.** Lolita Dunning, p. 40.
- 8.** Joe Rodriguez, p. 36.
- 9.** David Joel, p. 30.

officers believe the reforms have utterly hamstrung their ability to do their job. The end of solitary confinement for 16- to 17-year-olds, in particular, they say, has resulted in more violence, since they've lost the biggest consequence for misbehavior. Both inmates and officers think that a new generation of COs, many of whom have taken a substantial number of college credits, is less street-smart and thus less equipped to deal with the brutal realities of the job. And, therefore, more likely to clash with inmates. As for the stench, it shows no signs of leaving.

—NOREEN MALONE (SENIOR EDITOR, NEW YORK) AND
RAHA NADDAF (NEWS EDITOR, THE MARSHALL PROJECT)

“SOMETIMES YOU GOTTA GO IN THE SHOWER AND GO KNIFE-TO-KNIFE, RIGHT?”

DAVID JOEL, INMATE

A 19-year-old currently in Rikers on charges of first-degree assault and first-degree robbery. He has been held since November 2013 on \$20,000 bail.

IN THE BOX,¹ the bed is on the wall, so it's lower to the floor. You've gotta be careful because there's a lot of roaches and mice running around. You'll be lying down with your eyes closed, and you'll hear all of them making noises, going through your bags on the floor, ripping up pages from the books.

They don't got no air conditioner [in the box]. Sometimes you be in your cell like nude, because it be hot and the windows don't open up, and you'll be complaining like, “I need my window fixed.” And the officers will say, “We'll put in a work order.” But it never gets done.

What I'd do, I'd grab paper and I'd make a fan out of it. Sometimes the paper gets worn out, because I'd use it a lot, and sometimes there won't be no more paper, so I'd fan myself with my shirt.

The box—it's like you're locked up twice as much as you're locked up now. It's a small room, so you really don't move around a lot. You wake up, and there's a toilet right next to your head. You look out the window and you see birds flying, and that only leads your mind into wanting freedom more. And since it's a small room, it makes you think crazy.

I'm not gonna lie, I felt like hanging myself. I felt like committing suicide because of the things that run through my head when I'm in that thing:

Why me? Why am I in jail? Why do I have to go through these things for this long? Why am I in the box? I hate it here. I hate my life. I have no life. I hate freedom. I can't taste freedom. I can't hold freedom. I miss my family. I miss my friends.

1. Slang for solitary confinement. Joel spent four months in solitary for fighting.

In the middle of the night, people be yelling. People be singing, people be rapping, people be banging. You talk to people under the door. You lie on the ground. Which is dirty, so you put a sheet on the floor. And you put your mouth close to the door. You gotta yell at them so people can hear you. And sometimes you get tired and sometimes your throat hurts. Hours. 'Cause there's nothing else to do. We talk about our lives. We talk about being in jail. Changing our ways. We talk about what are we gonna be when we get out.

Some people are scared, and they find the box safer for them. I've seen inmates—when they get into fights—they'll be like, “Can you please send me to the box, because I can't be anywhere else but the box.” A lot of people go in the box calm and they come out crazy.

Right now, I'm five-foot-seven. I grew. I came here when I was five feet tall. In the beginning I kept getting into all these fights because I wanted attention. So I was in the gang. You need people that's gonna help you out. You're repping that gang, and you come to jail, other gangs have problems with that gang. That's why I got jumped. Hospitalized like four times.

It was a little bit serious. But that's how you get your little freedom, too. Because when you're in the hospital, you see people from the outside. They give you the attention that you been dying to get. Your family comes to visit you because you're in a serious problem, you understand? Once you in the hospital, you wouldn't want to leave the hospital, it's just like a little bit home.

I've been incarcerated for so long, and I've fought so many people, they know not to bother me anymore. I've been jumped plenty of times and got into a lot of fights and got stabbed a lot, so they know who I am and they leave me alone. Sometimes you gotta go in the shower and go knife-to-knife, right? So when I visualize who runs the show, I walk up to that person and tell 'em, “Listen, my name is this, my name is that, I don't want no problems, I just want my respect.”

Whoever makes it out the shower gets the crib, gets to own the housing area.

[Since they restricted solitary], a lot of people taking advantage, so now they're like, “Oh, we can't go to the box, we can do what we wanna do now.” The only thing

MANIPULATION

“Gang members like to get into mental-observation units to then extort the mentally ill—taking their phone cards, making them buy them food. Could be sexual favors. It can even be in a correction officer's interest to have an alpha male running a unit, because they keep some of the peace.”

DANIEL SELLING, FORMER EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR OF MENTAL HEALTH FOR
CITY JAILS

→
Teenage inmates.

→
Inmates at
“Rosie's,” the
women's unit.

One Inmate's Day in Jail

4 AM

Wake up, shave.

5-5:30 AM

Breakfast.

6-7 AM

Time outdoors.

“It's not like we have pajamas, so you can pretty much just get up and go. But if you want to brush your teeth, you need to have done that already.”

7:15-10:30 AM

Work on grounds crew/trash pickup.

11 AM

Lunch shifts begin.

“The CO would give us a long pep talk about wearing your I.D. and tucking in your shirt. They would always use the phrase ‘You're grown-ass men.’”

3-5 PM

Mail; quiet time for napping, reading, and working out.

5 PM

TV on, people play chess/checkers.

“You can also shower. COs can see in, but everyone wears their underwear.”

5:30-7 PM

Dinner.

8 PM

Phone, free time.

11 PM

Lights out (under more recent rules, 9 p.m.).

“And every day is exactly the same.”

—AS TOLD BY A
RECENT INMATE IN
THE ERIC M. TAYLOR
CENTER



that's going to happen is just a \$25 ticket. Right now, I owe \$183. So I'm actually working it off at commissary.

When you get clothes sent up, that means a lot to other people. People see that and they be like, "Oh, he got support." The guards bring things in for the gangs. Like drugs. Lotion from home. Cologne. And they pay the officers. One time, a female guard had sexual intercourse with an inmate in exchange for money, drugs, a phone.

One female officer, she'll sit down and explain to me what to do, what not to do. She'll help me out sometimes when I need a new pen. She'll tell me to do good. That I shouldn't be here. She makes my day go by. She brings me books when she's not supposed to. She does things that she's not supposed to do. And she goes out of her way and does it for me because she knows deep inside that I deserve those things. One time I felt like having sex with her. And I told her, "I respect you, but I'm gonna fall back a little bit because I feel like I'm catching a lot of love for you. And I know that's not gonna happen here." Her response was like, "I understand, you've been locked up for a long time, you know I respect you, you know I wouldn't do that."

I be lonely a lot. I'm lonely now, actually. I just be sleeping most of the time. I'll take the drugs they gave me. Seroquel. Benadryl. I'll save that up so the times I don't have nothing to do, I'll take it and just wait until it hits me. And then I'll fall asleep and just wake up the next day and keep moving. It's like, *Fuck. I can't do this.*

"WHAT ABOUT OFFICERS LEAVING WITH BROKEN NOSE, BROKEN ARMS, SPIT ON, FECES THROWN ON THEM?"

OFFICER HOPE, CORRECTION OFFICER

A 42-year-old woman who works in the commissary at Otis Bantum Correctional Center.

WE DEAL WITH a lot of mental and physical abuse, from your inmates to your superiors. The superiors treat you like you a kid. The inmates, some are okay, very respectful. Some of them use profanity, they call you—excuse my mouth—bitches. They want you to suck this or that. You see so many penises you go home and probably don't want the penis you got lying next to you. They jerk off in front of female officers. They try to threaten your life, and you have to take the threats very seriously.

It's a lot of stuff we handle as correction officers and we never get the props. Nobody never says, "Oh, y'all

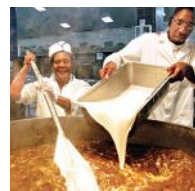
do a wonderful job." Nobody. We always are downplayed. Because you have some officers, don't get me wrong, that don't do what they supposed to do. They are dirty. They bring in stuff. It's not an easy job. You do sometimes over 100 hours in overtime a month on top of 40 hours a week.² As soon as you hear "Inmate, oh, he get beat up," nobody don't understand what happened. What about officers leaving with broken nose, broken arms, spit on, feces thrown on them, urine thrown on them? You're not dealing with a regular person on the street. Excuse my mouth, you're dealing with animals. Some of them, some of them not. The majority are not there for being a good person.

I can tell you one incident I will remember for the rest of my life. It was 1997. It was the housing area, the bing³ where guys are locked in 23 hours. And it was on a midnight tour and the officer came and I took my count like I'm supposed to. And they just threw the keys at me. No one explained what I had to do.

You know in a zoo when it's time to feed the animals? And the animals is banging and screaming? That's exactly what it was that night. I had one inmate say, "Pass me the tissue." And you have to go because if an inmate calls you, you have to go see. Next cell, "Bring some tissue, bring some tissue." All along, when I'm bringing them the tissue, they're looking at my behind. "Oh, she has a big ass. You ever had dick, you ever got fucked in your ass?" They're masturbating in front of you. *Oh my God.* You can write them up, but that don't do nothing. That was the night when I had to decide, was this job for me? Because I sat at that desk, and I cried that night, and I prayed, and I asked the good lord, "If this job is for me, you will let me survive this night."

As a senior officer now, you try to work with these new officers, nobody wants to hear what you have to say. They come in here with these 60 college credits, but you have to be from where some of these dudes and women [the inmates] come from so you can communicate better with them. Nobody wants to hear you talking philosophy to them, because they don't understand what you saying. You have to really come down to their level. The 60-college-credit people, they're not understanding them. And officers who come in here from college, they usually go back to their other jobs or back to school because they can't deal with it. People hear Correction and hear dollar signs. Instead, when they get there, nobody wants to stay there, because who wants to deal?

People are not seeing or hearing how officers are being assaulted. Why? Because the department tries to hide a lot of stuff under the carpet about the officers being injured. Right now, your hands are tied because if you do something to these inmates wrong, the department will want to bring you up on charges.



Workers prepare beef stew.



Mess hall serving ware.



Standard items issued to an inmate upon arrival.

Mealtime

"The food was rotten or undercooked. Reminded me of homeless people digging out of a garbage can. In the middle of the day, they give everyone—they say it's chicken. But I've never seen chicken that looked like that. Just a big piece of something with a lot of grease. If you didn't have the ability to buy commissary, you'd starve. My breakfast would usually consist of oatmeal or Pop-Tarts. All they had was items that could cook in 190-degree water or was edible as is. Boiling water was very dangerous in that place."

—ROBERT EADDY, RECENT INMATE

² The average correction officer's base annual salary is \$69,862, but with fringe benefits like overtime, it rises to \$137,747.

³ Another name for solitary confinement. ⁴ Known as "splashing." ⁵ Upon arrival, inmates are asked their religion and allowed to attend only those services. To switch requires a formal application and interview with the chaplain of the requested faith.

⁶ "Patients like to decline treatment in Rikers because they feel sedated, and that's too dangerous because they feel like they're not alert enough." —DANIEL SELLING, FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF MENTAL HEALTH FOR CITY JAILS ⁷ "There's very little rhyme or reason about why things get locked down or how long they get locked down," one administrator says. "It seems and feels indiscriminate."

How to Get Your Cell Cleaned

"To get Sanitation to come in, you have to flood the cells. I used to take the books that I'm done reading like five times and flush them down the bowl so the water could overflow, until your whole cell would be full of water. They come and they're like, 'What happened?' I tell them, 'I need Sanitation to come here because the cell, it has old bugs in it, and y'all not doing anything to clean it.' And they'll be like, 'All right, give me a minute.' Sometimes you break the toilet when they walk away. I'm like, 'If y'all don't get me out the cell, this cell is not gonna be able to be used no more because I'm gonna break everything.' Most of the officers respect violence."

—DAVID JOEL, INMATE

Who's in Charge



CORRECTION OFFICERS

55% Women
45% Men



WARDENS

71% Women
29% Men

Once an inmate spits in your face and then he puts his hand behind his head, there's nothing nobody can do. So now you walking around with spit on your face from this inmate. Once the inmate throws urine on you, there's nothing you can do.⁴

The adolescents is assaulting these officers, too, I hear. They took the bing away from them. So, they feel, *Okay, we can beat you up, nothing is going to happen to us.* Everything is for the inmates. It changed when this new commissioner came in. Change is good sometimes, don't get me wrong. But sometimes you have to be careful in the changes that you make because it's your officers that's suffering, not the inmates.

The funny part about Rikers Island: The inmates that's out there with the guns and stuff, probably robbing or raping somebody's mama or sister or something, that is the man that you have to protect from other inmates. Ain't that something? But when he was out there robbin' and rapin' and doing what he was doing, who was protecting the innocent? Here's this man having three square meals a day, able to call his family. And here it is you have a mother going to the cemetery on her baby's birthday. But still, the city gonna pay to make sure he eats and is well protected. These inmates have 24-hour bodyguards. Why should I have a pity party for them? I don't know them. They pay me for the three C's: care, custody, and control. They don't say nothing about social working.

"WE USED TO PLAY CHESS THROUGH TALKING IN SOLITARY. WE'D SCREAM OUT OUR MOVES."

ROBERT EADDY, RECENT INMATE

A 39-year-old man in Rikers most recently in 2010 for sale of a controlled substance, before serving a three-year sentence upstate.

MOST HOUSING FACILITIES ON Rikers house 60 people. It could be a dorm situation or 60 cells. But you're in that cell alone. When you're in a cell by yourself, you don't have to worry about sleeping next to someone who's smelly. My cell was very small. I'd say about 8-by-11. You have a bed and a toilet. It was rat-infested. But it's still better than being in the dorm, dealing with 59 other different body odors and sleeping problems. It's hard to sleep because you're worrying about someone hitting you over the head late in the night. Somebody could be doing a gang initiation and you're their target. Someone could have it out for you. Problems you had on the street could follow you into the jail.

When you're in solitary, you get an hour outside, but you know in the zoo, how they have the animal in a cage? That's how it is. No weights, no basketball, no sports, no nothing. When I was in solitary, I was sending out many letters. On an average week, five.

The guard and the pastor⁵ would come by and speak to you, make sure you're okay. And the people in the next cell, you could yell and scream out and talk to them. We used to play chess through talking in solitary. We'd scream out our moves. You would draw the board on the paper and scream the moves out to whoever you were playing.

My first time in Rikers was in 1994 for selling crack. I was 17. Rikers Island was way worse in 1994 than it is now. I've noticed with the youth today, everything is about trying to gain a reputation. So they think this is some type of camp, or a place to go to make their names known. Once you get upstate, you can relax. Rikers, you can't do that. Rikers, you're just there, wasting time.

"PEOPLE ON LITHIUM OR PROZAC AREN'T GETTING HALF THAT DAY'S MEDICATION."

ALEX ABELL, URBAN JUSTICE CENTER

A 32-year-old who works for the Mental Health Project of the Urban Justice Center and visits Rikers twice weekly.

CORRECTION OFFICERS often refer to incarcerated people as "bodies" and "packages." They'll sometimes say, "I need a package delivered," and that means to move a human being to a different housing unit.

Nothing in criminal law in New York says if you're on trial you can't have clean clothes. But people may go ten, 11 months without access to laundry, outside of the sink and a bar of soap. You'll see people covered in their own filth. Last week, an inmate told me that he is supposed to receive twice-a-day medication sometime between 6:30 and eight in the morning and once in the evening. But the officer steps inside the entrance at the other side of the room and calls his name and says it's time for meds, but not loudly at all, and doesn't make an attempt to actually contact this person. The dorm is so loud. And he doesn't hear his name or that it's time [for his meds]. And the officers don't follow up. If they don't get a response, they walk away.

In that dorm, this happens half the time, based on what I've heard. So people on Lithium or Prozac⁶ aren't getting half that day's medication, and it can be absolutely disastrous.

That's not to mention there are often facilitywide lockdowns, when no movement is allowed in the entire facility.⁷ If that happens when medications or appointments are scheduled, they often don't get their [treatment].

Therapy at Rikers often involves only a one-minute talk in which the doctor or social worker may say, "You're at risk of injuring yourself. Are you okay?" And then they say, "Yeah? Good?" And then they move on.

And it might be done in such a nonconfidential manner. One person I was working with, he had anger-

management issues, and he was aware of it. He knew he needed to talk with someone and had requested mental-health [services]. But they would only see him in his unit, in the presence of his peers, and that didn't work. People could hear everything he was saying, and it wasn't therapeutic at all.

Meanwhile, if you're in punitive segregation, these "sessions" are often conducted through the cell door.⁸ The doctor or social worker puts his mouth to the glass, and the person puts his ear to the glass from the other side. And they more or less say, "Are you gonna hurt yourself? Okay? See you next week."

"THEY LET YOU KISS TWICE"

SHAIAN CABRERA, VISITOR

A conversation with three strangers, all riding the Q100 from Long Island City to Rikers Island on a Thursday afternoon: Mabel Ortiz, 16, an Inwood resident visiting her boyfriend, Joseph, who has been at Rikers for five months for attempted murder; Candice, 26, a South Bronx resident visiting her 26-year-old fiancé, who has been in Rikers for four years; and Shaian Cabrera, 19, a Bronx resident visiting her 22-year-old husband, who is charged with murder and has been in Rikers for three years.

How is it being a young woman visiting Rikers?

CANDICE: It is horrible. He is on a no-contact visit. You can't touch. There is a Plexiglas that separates you. Supposedly, they found contraband in the cells. I think it was a scalpel. They found it in his cell, so they banned him from contact visits and made his incarceration longer. He already did 90 days' solitary confinement.

MABEL: It's better than not visiting him. There was a time that I couldn't visit my boyfriend for a month and a half. 'Cause he wanted to be a badass. He was fighting. Now I can see him whenever.

How's it been for you, Shaian?

SHAIAN: I can only see him for an hour. I used to be able to touch him, but now that's a lot of problems.

What do you all think about being searched?

CANDICE: You get searched three or four times. And stuff still gets in there. So it's all of that for nothing. MABEL: They just like to touch too much [pointing toward her crotch].

SHAIAN: They treat us like inmates. They don't want us to come back.

How much do you worry about them getting hurt?

SHAIAN: When he doesn't call me, I get really worried. Sometimes they shut down the building and you get no phone calls, no visits, no nothing.

MABEL: He just turned 17. He's with the adolescents. You know how us teenagers are. We don't think. We just do stupid things.

There have been recent reports that Rikers is debating whether to get rid of hugging "hello" and "good-bye" because of contraband getting in. What do you guys think about that?

CANDICE: That's kind of stupid. The reality is, you have the COs that's really bringing in the shit.

SHAIAN: Sometimes they use kids to bring stuff in.

CANDICE: If a man asks you to bring in anything, that man don't love you.

Mabel, aren't you supposed to be in school?

MABEL: Yes, I am. But I came to see him today. Last week, only once. I usually come for three visits.⁹

CANDICE: I try to make two. At least once a week.

SHAIAN: I come three times a week.

CANDICE: It is a second job.

What about putting money on the books? How much does that cost?

CANDICE: You buy their clothes. You buy their food. Cosmetics. Phone. The phone costs a lot. It's a dollar and some change for one call.

How's the food?

MABEL: My boyfriend only eats soups. That's the only thing he know how to make.

CANDICE: Oodles of Noodles.¹⁰ Mine made a pie last week. Out of something. I don't know what they use.

When they are in the box, can you still visit them?

CANDICE: You can still visit, but you just locked in.

Can you kiss them when you visit?

CANDICE: I don't think they let you fondle.

MABEL: They let you kiss twice. When you say "hi" and when you say "bye."

Can you French-kiss?

CANDICE: It all depends on the COs.

"IT WAS THROUGH THE AUTOPSY THAT I FOUND OUT WHAT HAPPENED."

TERRI SCROGGINS, GIRLFRIEND

Age 43, dated Victor Woods, who died of internal bleeding in October 2014 while awaiting trial for drug possession at Rikers Island.

VICTOR AND I WERE TOGETHER for about 20 years. A week after Victor had been arrested, a chaplain called me and asked me if I knew Victor Woods. He asked if I knew Victor was at Rikers. He said he had a seizure this morning and passed away.

I just started screaming and yelling and hung up the phone. He called back and asked if I understood. I said, "Y'all killed him." He didn't respond. That was that.

8. "There are plenty of people in solitary who are severely mentally ill and disobeyed a direct order or told an officer to fuck off or who were just not following directions or may have lashed out against somebody when they were paranoid." — SELLING 9. Inmates awaiting trial are allowed up to three hourlong visits per week; once you've been sentenced, it drops to two visits. 10. "From commissary, people like fudge surprises. Chocolate-chip cookies. You get Sprite, but it's not really Sprite. Everything is diet. Except for the snacks." — DAVID JOEL, INMATE

→
An August 2013 fight in the George R. Verno Center, caught on surveillance tape.

→
Inside a solitary-confinement cell.

The Buy-In

"There's this common term: 'This is their house. We're visitors.' The DOC runs it. To change housing units, to get officers to do their jobs in a different way, it requires a full buy-in. You have all these meetings, lots of planning, big celebratory moments. Lots of training. And soon after the program is set in motion and lots of money is spent, it quickly becomes apparent that the officers are not part of the change. It's not because the officers are indifferent to the change. They've never been engaged properly."

—DANIEL SELLING, FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF MENTAL HEALTH IN CITY JAILS

Avoiding Boredom

"It's very strange: Everybody watched crime dramas. Like *CSI*. All day long. The criminal always loses. So I don't know why everyone wants to watch that."

—"DANIEL," RECENT INMATE

Also popular on TV
Jerry Springer, *Law & Order*, *Criminal Minds*, *Flashpoint*, *Blue Bloods*.



I learned more once Victor's mom got us a lawyer and we started investigating. Nobody had told me anything. Eventually, we got the autopsy, which showed he'd had a seizure and ulcers. It was through the autopsy that I found out what happened. We later learned that he had serious ulcers, and they had started bleeding, so he bled to death internally. We learned that other inmates had pleaded with officers to get him medical help and they didn't help him.

A week earlier, he was perfectly healthy at my aunt's retirement party. He was dancing. He was fine.

After he died, I went with his niece to Rikers to pick up his things: a red Champ hoodie sweater, his wallet, a gray-red-and-black Chicago Bulls hat. I still have the hat. His niece took the sweater. She was with me, and it was getting cold, so she put it on.

"GEORGE R.R. MARTIN WAS VERY, VERY POPULAR."

CHRISTIAN REES, LIBRARIAN

A former volunteer at Rikers.

YOU CAN'T TAKE anything hardback in. It has to be softcover. What I eventually learned was that there was a fear they could make armor, so if they taped the hardcovers together, they could protect themselves in fights. They could have about 12 books maximum in the cells.

The selection ranged a lot. Guys requested computer-programming-language books. Spiritual stuff—Bibles, Korans, philosophy. We had foreign languages—Russian, Vietnamese, Spanish.

There's a lot of interest in John Grisham-like novels. George R.R. Martin was very, very popular. *Fifty Shades of Grey*, too. James Patterson was the most popular. There was a culture of collecting books in a series—they'd talk about them. We had a big call for urban lit, so books geared toward people of color, talking about neighborhoods they'd grown up in. Playing off the assumed dreams of black or Latino youths. A lot of them were really well written. Very gritty, with slang and localisms. And it was mostly young black guys who took these books, who had not finished high school or just finished. And they'd take two or three at a time and just eat through them.

The only real censorship I encountered was one time they wouldn't let a guy take a textbook for getting licensed as an electrician, because there was a

concern that he could teach himself to tamper with the security systems. There were certain books that it was just generally understood might create problems with the guards, and we wouldn't bring them, like *The 48 Laws of Power*, which is popular among gang leaders.¹¹

In solitary, there would be these big bulkhead doors and we'd lean down and they'd push their books out of a slot and we'd try to have a conversation. But they couldn't look through the cart, so a guy would say, "Hey, do you have a copy of James Joyce's *Ulysses*?" The same guy also asked for *The Odyssey* and Plato's *Republic*. Usually it was around lunchtime, so there was this stinking cafeteria food.

"WE DO HAVE PEPPER SPRAY, WHICH IS GREAT."

JOE RODRIGUEZ, CORRECTION OFFICER

A 48-year-old working at the Robert N. Davoren Complex.

SOMETIMES, CERTAIN INMATES, they don't respect authority. It's gotten more dangerous now,¹² they say, because in 2016, they are also removing the bing for the 18-to-21-year-olds, who are the worst. So now the inmates are feeling more like, "You can't do nothing to me." There are cameras, which are in a way good and in a way bad. It shows the world that it wasn't us. It was the inmate that was the aggressor. But now the inmates feel like because the camera is there, they can be more aggressive toward

FACE SLASHINGS

"For whatever reasons, there's a lot of scalpels floating around the jail right now. Medical scalpels. And so face slashings are making a comeback. You see lots of mostly young people with big scars on their faces."

RILEY DOYLE EVANS, 27,
JAIL-SERVICES COORDINATOR FOR
BROOKLYN DEFENDER SERVICES

→
Contraband,
including jail-made
weapons and drugs.

Dress Code

Inmates at Rikers often wear street clothes (no gang colors or logos allowed), and sentenced inmates wear green uniforms. Adolescents wear brown. For visits, everyone wears gray jumpsuits. Orange jumpsuits are worn by those in solitary. Green smocks signify someone on suicide watch.

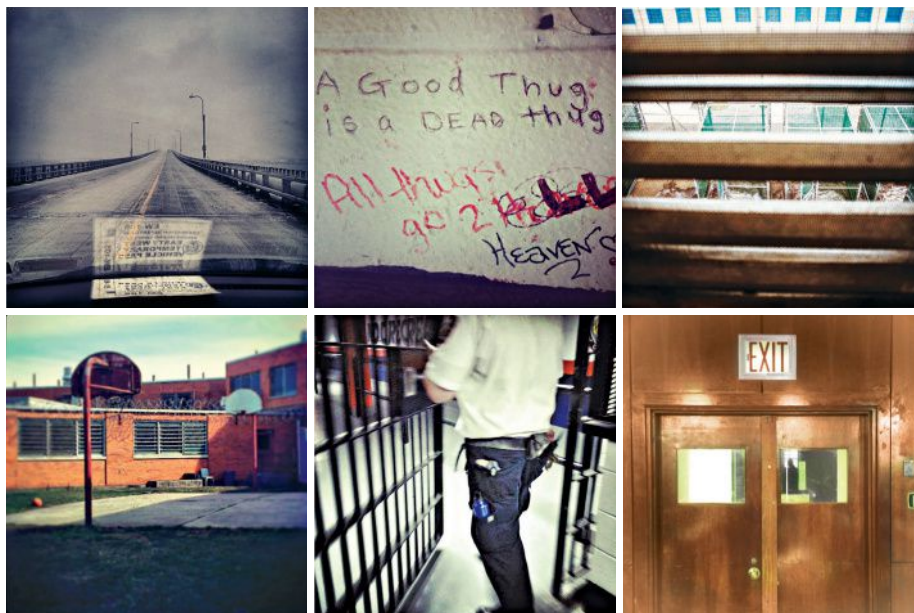
"Boofing" a Weapon and "Popping" a Cell

"You need your weapon. You need to learn how to keep that weapon from getting found. There's a technique called 'boofing.' You take a weapon and you wrap it up and it goes into your rectum. I learned how to get out of my cell without the guard opening the gate. They call it 'popping the cell.' Once the guard opens your cell, all you gotta do is stick some tissue in the mechanism. It reads on their board as closed, but you can shake it and open it up on your own from that moment on."

—ROBERT EADDY,
RECENT INMATE

11. A best-selling how-to guide for gaining influence over people. 12. "Rikers, I believe, is more dangerous than state prison. Lots of people are brand new, so there is more opportunity for peer pressure, more possibility for violence. Especially with gangs—the gangs are way more vicious than up north, because people feel like they have to keep their reputation up. People are younger, they're coming up. People feel like they have to do certain things to prove themselves. It's closer to the street. Right now, the Bloods are fighting against each other. They'll all split internally. There are Hispanic Bloods and white Bloods, too. It's way more complicated and messy. There has tended to be a lot of fighting over what programs to watch. Recently, they've added a TV so the blacks can have one and the Latinos can have another. This is to alleviate the pressure between groups." —MELVIN WILLIAMS, RECENT INMATE





THE VIEW FROM INSTAGRAM

←
#Rikers:
Clockwise from
left: The bridge
to Rikers; bathroom
graffiti inside
the visitors center;
the new maximum-
security wing;
the entrance
to a chapel;
a correction
officer at an
adolescent unit;
an exercise and
recreation area.

Sex With Guards

"The problem of sexual assault was not that bad at Rikers. Now, consensual sex [between guards and inmates]: That's pretty common. It could have started from the street—there are so many inmates who know the officers from the streets, and it's like, 'Oh, yeah, I know your cousin ...' and they start giggling. It goes from there. Sometimes officers and prisoners used to date back in the neighborhood when they were younger and they reconnect at Rikers. A lot of these female officers are pretty young."

—MELVIN WILLIAMS,
RECENT INMATE

Jail Famous

"I had a phone for two months. Mine was from an officer. I'd look through her pictures. Selfies. At the beach. A cell phone is like freedom. You're on the web, you know, Facebook, Instagram. I took pictures and then I told her, when you go home, to send them to my family members so they can see how I look or they can see how I'm doing in jail. You're jail famous if you do that."

—DAVID JOEL,
INMATE

you. A lot of what they say is the SMD. "Suck my dick." A lot. We do have pepper spray, which is great, and we didn't have that before, years ago, when I first started. But once they get this close, you can't go for that. You have to defend yourself the best you can.

I personally don't like solitary anyway. I feel like I gotta be up and down the tier to make sure nobody's killing themselves. But if they commit an infraction, there should be something that we can fall back on where, like, you're not gonna get visits for a month. Or you're not gonna get phone calls for a week. Something.

Right now, we're dealing with a new generation of officers. I will tell you myself, I'm a GED baby. No college. No nothing. And I feel like, *I'm a supervisor in the jail. I know everything. I'm an officer 100 percent.* And I did come off the streets. Harlem. I had no violent background or anything like that, but I know how to mix it up. The academy used to be under ten weeks. Now it's about four months. And I feel like it's gotten worse. Anyone can be paper smart. You have to be jail smart.

There was a time where the violence pretty much died. They pretty much enacted a system where if an inmate commits a violent crime, [they were prosecuted].¹³ Once they implemented that, the inmates got rid of all their weapons, the slashings and stab-bings went down. I would say the late '90s.

A lot of times these inmates are looking at life, though. They have nothing to lose. What you gonna do to them, give them more bing time? We're human. You know, in the streets somebody comes up to me and slaps the crap out of me, am I gonna stand there and just take it? Or

am I going to defend myself and go after the dude? It's hard. And then you're dealing with inmates who rest all day. They eat. They work out. They sleep their eight to ten hours. They have a whole lot more energy than us. We're on our feet almost all day. Sixteen to 18 hours a day by the time we get home and sleep a couple hours. Officers are tired. They don't see their family. It builds.

I always advise officers, "Have a good relationship with your doctor." It's much better now because I came up in the age where they were allowed to smoke. Sixteen hours a day with just secondhand smoke around you. And that's why there's so many officers who pass away so early in their retirement, because of those unhealthy things. Dealing with inmates like that, a lot of officers end up drinking.

"THEY JUST STOOD THERE NOT DOING NOTHING, MAN."

MIGUEL MENDOZA, INMATE

*A 40-year-old man serving four months
in Rikers for petit larceny.*

SOMETHING HAPPENED two days ago. The guy overdosed on BuSpar—a mental-health medication. And they just stood there not doing nothing, man. I went to speak to the guy and his eyes were

¹³ After a riot almost broke out at the jail in 1994, a jail intelligence unit was created, which referred criminal cases to Bronx prosecutors. Arrests of inmates increased. "My vision with this was, jail and prison cannot be a safe haven for criminal conduct," said Bernard Kerik, the correction commissioner from 1998 to 2000. "What happened to those policies? ... I don't know myself."

“YOU COULDN’T TAKE ANY PART OF THIS ORGANIZATION AND SAY, ‘BOY, THAT’S RUNNING REALLY WELL.’”

JOSEPH PONTE, COMMISSIONER,
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

Interview by Bill Keller, editor-in-chief of The Marshall Project

Rikers has gotten a lot of attention in the year since you arrived, not much of it very flattering. What do you see as the main problems of Rikers and what do you see that’s going right?

There’s a lot of systems issues that have been deficient for years. Our emergency-response policy was written in the ’90s and hasn’t changed much. The fact that New York in 2014 still had not adopted many of the very good, effective ways to manage young offenders was surprising to me. Because there’s great models out there that have done complete turnarounds.

What caused New York to be behind on those reforms?

I didn’t come here to throw rocks at anybody. I don’t know if it was a tough political climate or if people didn’t propose stuff. In most systems, you’re either adult corrections or juvenile corrections. I learned a ton about juvenile corrections in Maine. We started here in April, we eliminated punitive segregation for adolescents in December. We’re still kind of fine-tuning how that should work.

One of your predecessors—Martin Horn—says the single best thing that could happen to Rikers would be to reduce the population.

We do not have much independent authority to reduce the population, but some of the mayor’s initiatives—the mental-health task force, the recently announced initiative to look at inmates that have been here for long periods of time, looking for ways to divert adolescents prior to coming into custody—would be helpful.

Your welcome to New York

from the head of the guards union, Norman Seabrook, was a little chilly. It was kind of, We don’t need any of this sort of hug-a-thug, touchy-feely reform stuff like they do in Maine. How’s your relationship with him now?

We get along fine. Norman’s Norman. We want the same thing. We want safe, humane facilities.

One issue where you and the union have disagreed is solitary.

Correction officers seem to think that that’s an essential tool for preserving order and safety in the units. You’ve been focused on the downside of isolation.

For punitive segregation, we reduced the sentence per infraction from 90 days to 30 days. Then, it’s not just about the punishment, it’s how you safely house them after. In some areas, it’s added staff, depending on where we house them. What we found was that if somebody had committed a serious assault on staff or a serious assault on another inmate, there was no central monitoring of that inmate after the infraction. One, was there an infraction? Was there behavior that should get criminally charged? And then, if he was found guilty of the infraction, what happened to him or her after?

How much of the problem at Rikers is just that the buildings are so old?

A lot of the physical plant has deteriorated. The old cellblock designs are difficult in visibility—meaning it’s a long hallway with cells on both sides. Most of the modern designs are kind of like horseshoes, where you can stand in one place and see almost everything. We’re trying to make up for that (Continued on page 119)

like in the back of his head, so I woke him up. He ran into the wall. He pissed on himself and fell down. I ran over to the officer, and he went and got the medical staff. They took fucking like 30 minutes to get to this guy, man, and they’re right here! They didn’t want to even touch him. I had to put him on the stretcher and everything. That’s not my job, I just did it just to help him out.

I’m in the HIV dorm, and sometimes guys shit on themselves, piss themselves. Some of these guys are really sick and the nurses don’t want to touch them. They don’t want to do their job like they’re supposed to.

“DESKS WERE THROWN AROUND LIKE BOTTLE CAPS.”

PETER SELLINGER, TEACHER

Age 44, has taught for 13 years on Rikers.

RIGHT NOW, WE’RE HAVING a lot of safety issues because there’s a perception and a reality that there are very few consequences for bad behavior [since solitary for juveniles was eliminated]. Weapons find their way in, projectiles are used on teachers. Books, pencils, erasers—they throw them at each other. The deterrent when a severe fight breaks out is pepper spray. At times, the teaching staff has been very badly affected by its use [by getting sprayed]. We have roughly 60, 70 students in the solitary program, and that changes on a daily basis, because students [everyone under 18] come in as newly incarcerated and then they go. It fluctuates. The average stay for a student is 50 days. We are following the same Common Core curriculum that every teacher and student follow.

One of the things that has to be maintained is a separation of potential gang members. So they arrive at class in stages. We had a riot recently where entire classrooms emptied out and there was a battle royale. It was around Dominican Independence Day, and a Dominican gang member went into an unlocked classroom and he had a specific intent to fight with rival gang members. Once that happened, all the classrooms started emptying out, because there is only one officer in or nearby the classroom. He can’t stop 15 bodies from emptying out all at once. On that day, there were not that many officers on the school floor in total. Teachers were pinned down in their classrooms. Desks were thrown around like bottle caps. One teacher protected another teacher with his body as these desks were flying.

In one particular class, which was made up primarily of Blood gang members, there was a big resistance to doing anything related to work. This one student, I remember meeting him the first day. I introduced myself, and his immediate response was “Fuck you, get out of my face,” and he slapped the schoolwork out of my hand. He got a big reaction from his classmates. Well, fast-forward, I gave him a certificate of improvement, because he eventually became less belligerent and did some class work and interacted with me better.

You either have to be crazy or a really caring person. That's how we get that trust going with students. They say, "Why are you here?" and I say, "I'm looking at the reason right now."

"WE RUN THE PHONES. WE ARE THE SAY-SO. BUT EVERY BLOOD AIN'T YOUR BLOOD."

AARON "POOTZ" JONES, RECENT INMATE

A 33-year-old in Rikers most recently in 2014, for an assault charge. (He has since been acquitted.)

WHEN YOU ARE BLOOD on Rikers Island, you have a sense of power. We dominate. We are the OBCC, Only Bloods Can Control. OBCC is a building in Rikers Island, that's where I was. We run the phones. We run how we going to eat at night. We are the say-so. But every Blood ain't your Blood. You might join the gang later than I did, but you and me had prior problems. But because you Blood now, I gotta love you? Blood might have saved us from killing each other, but Blood don't mean I gotta like your ass. The Bloods was really here to stop the oppression, originally. But in due time, in growing larger in numbers, we became the oppressor in jail today. It is too much of us. If there are 50 men in a house, 30 is Blood.

I've been to Rikers Island under Giuliani, Bloomberg. Under Giuliani, we be up all night, eat what we want, do what we want. De Blasio has designed the jail to make you not want to come back.

The COs that they are hiring now, they are uptight.

TOOTHACHE IN SOLITARY

"I had to cut my wrist to go see the dentist. I've got the marks to prove it. I had a toothache for like a week, couldn't take it no more. So I had to cut up, and when they opened the slot to put the food in, I stuck my hand out and they seen the blood and they took me out."

MIGUEL MENDOZA, 40
RECENT INMATE

They treat you like you are guilty already.

You know how many ESU beatdowns there are?¹⁴ They will come in there and whip yo' ass. But guess what? If you in a gang, and if they come in there and hit you, I better be off my bed whupping some ass with you or getting my ass whupped with you.¹⁵

In 2012, there was a situation with a Blood who was a big Blood. COs, they couldn't deal with him in no way. So what they do is cracked his cell. That's where other inmates come in and whip that ass, while you sleep. Or it might be COs who take you to a different part of the jail by yourself, to a bathroom, and whip yo' ass. They the law in there.

"OFFICERS COULD LOOK STRAIGHT IN AND SEE THE WOMEN SHOWERING."

LOLITA DUNNING, RECENT INMATE

A 47-year-old released in March on bail after six months in Rikers on an attempted-murder charge.

THE MAIN OFFICERS THERE, they was women. They were all right. But one officer, he was so rude and disrespectful. He told me because my gray roots were showing that I needed to get my hair done and dye my roots. And then he was calling me Grandma. He said my husband was gay. He said a whole lot of different things. I reported him, and [someone from the Board of Correction] came out to see me, but she wasn't really there to help. She was like, "Do you find him attractive?"

You have to buy the soap, because the soap that they give you has lye in it and it will burn your private parts up. So you needed to buy soap, shower slippers, deodorant. They didn't sell makeup. They sell douches and sanitary napkins. They also give you only like two at a time, so you have to constantly ask for more.

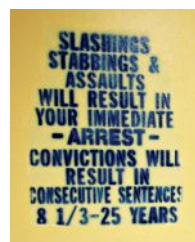
There is a big open shower in the dorm. In the segregation unit, there's a wall between the shower stalls. There's no doors, but there's a wall in between. In the dorm, the guard desk, what they call a bubble, is right next to it. You could look straight into the bathroom from the bubble, and there was always male officers in that bubble. Officers could see the women showering. They pretended not to look, but you know they do.

In the dorm, you have to go to the bathroom to change your clothes if you don't want the officers looking at you, because there's cameras. *(Continued on page 119)*

→ A small, unbreakable tin wall mirror—nearly actual size—in a solitary cell. Reflection is of a slatted window.



↑ Phone placed in meal slot of a mental-observation-unit cell for inmates.



↑ A sign posted at the Otis Bantum Center.

Phone Politics

"I gave a bag of mayonnaise for a week of phone calls. It was like ten phone calls or something like that. There are things in commissary that are hard to find. So when they have mayonnaise, you try to stock up on it. BBQ chips are more popular than the other chips, they run out really quick, so you can trade those for phone calls. Everyone does very exact calculations. Like a pack of mayo costs 10 cents and a phone call costs \$1.50 for a short phone call. And usually the deals are as close to one-to-one as is possible. A lot of people give away phone calls because they don't have anyone to call. The phones are probably the biggest source of drama."

—"DANIEL," RECENT INMATE

14. The ESU (Emergency Service Unit) is a group of correction officers, sometimes donning riot gear, which breaks up fights and conducts contraband sweeps. "We called them 'Ninja Turtles,'" says Diallo Madison, a 49-year-old inmate who was in Rikers last year for a parole violation. "If they are doing a shakedown of a housing unit, that means they are coming to search every cell. You have to walk with your mattress. Line up. Take off all your clothes except underwear. You get your mattress and run it through the X-ray machine."

15. "I have clients sent to the hospital because a guard has beat them so badly they've suffered broken bones or dislocated bones. People who are victims of staff assault typically get written up for assaulting staff." —RILEY DOYLE EVANS, JAIL-SERVICE COORDINATOR



No one is better at making CHILDREN LAUGH than **BOSWICK** the



Fears of

clown. He doesn't understand why ADULTS are SO SCARED of him.



a Clown

PHOTOGRAPHS BY AMANDA DEMME

BY
**BENJAMIN
WALLACE**

A

MONG THE indignities the clown routinely endures, the theft of his Ralph Wiggum antenna topper barely registered. Until a few weeks earlier, a foam miniature of the imbecilic *Simpsons* character, mid-nose-pick, had crowned the antenna of the clown's Toyota Yaris. Then some joker had taken it, and now the car, though small and red and still hinting at foolishness, was missing the finial touch that nudged it into clown-car territory.

Not that there was any mistaking its owner's occupation, as he stood behind the Yaris in a parking lot in Vallejo, north of San Francisco, on a mild evening not long ago. He wore a black top hat encircled by a purple ribbon, and a spritz of graying hair frizzed from under the brim. His nose was a red sphere, his face had an ocher tint, his cheeks were rouged, his eyelashes mascaraed, his lower lip underscored with black greasepaint. The sleeves of a polka-dot shirt ballooned out of a mauve vest, and suspenders kept a pair of baggy turquoise pants from puddling around the clown's enormous, bulbously toed shoes, which had been cobbled from alternating patches of black and white leather. If you looked closely, as he popped the hatch to retrieve a bubble-gum-pink suitcase filled with props, you could see that his right index finger was torqued leftward from tying tens of thousands of balloon animals.

It is an occupational injury but a wound of honor, too. Anyone can throw on makeup and bill himself as a clown, but few are willing to go through what it takes to truly become one and bear the costs of that commitment. These include the kinds of reactions he has to deal with, like right then in the parking lot.

"Sir?"

Two couples in their 20s were walking past, giggling, and one of the men was speaking.

"Hello, sir!" the clown said.

The man gestured toward the woman he had his arm around and said, "She'd like a hug."

The woman shrieked, recoiling, as her boyfriend tried pulling her toward the clown.

"Oh, I hate clowns," the clown said in a falsetto pantomime, waving his hands above his head in mock panic. "*Ahhhhh*, they're scary! *Ahhhhh*!" ... How do you think I feel when I look in the mirror?"

The couples laughed, and the clown did, too, but he didn't really think it was funny. The whole scary-clown thing had gotten out of hand. Clowns now live in a world where everyone seems to hate them, or profess to do so. One of the remarks the clown hears most often, while driving, is someone in another car yelling—the words are always the same—"Fuckin' clown!" It surprises and dismays him every time.

ONE DAY EARLIER, Boswick, as the clown is known, stood in his office a floor below his apartment in the Inner Sunset neighborhood, on the south side of Golden Gate Park. He wore jeans and running shoes and an unbuttoned plaid shirt over a black T-shirt. Small patches of floor were visible amid a clutter of costumes and props and other clown detritus, which included an orange TV set; a pink chest of drawers; jester shoes with bells; a shelf full of *Mad*-magazine books; letters from publishers rejecting Boswick's proposed *Kid's Guide to Snotty Comebacks*; three whoopee cushions (he was running low); a photo of Boswick with an elephant at the Circus Circus casino in Las Vegas; a unicycle he'd forgotten how to ride; an old pair of clown shoes made by someone no longer alive; and a fish-shaped bag full of balloons in 17 colors, including lilac and periwinkle. "I get really anal," Boswick said. "I want to have a lot of colors."

There is still nothing Boswick would rather be doing, 27 years after he became a professional clown. Back then, clowning had seemed just the thing for a child of divorce who remembered "watching my parents argue when I was 4 and getting their attention by doing something weird and funny," who had gymnastic ability and thought it was a hoot to deliver a well-executed pratfall, who liked to juggle and had awoken one morning in college with the name Boswick on his tongue and finger-painted it across his dorm-room wall. Later, when he was accepted at both the Dell'Arte physical-theater school and the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Clown College, he chose Ringling largely because of the joy he felt when he opened its acceptance letter and confetti spilled out. In those days, clowns, far from being the butt of jokes, were still touchstones of

American childhood. Adults cherished youthful memories of Red Skelton and Bozo. Clowns featured prominently in the launch of a new circus, Cirque du Soleil. The craft of clowning could be deemed worthy of a MacArthur grant.

Boswick approached what he did with an artist's sincerity. During a six-month tour of Japan with Ringling's *The Living Unicorn* show (featuring a hybrid Angora goat named Lancelot who had a solitary horn projecting from his head), he'd thrived on the energy of the big top. If Boswick experienced any negativity, it came from colleagues. Once, as he was practicing juggling while standing on a friend's shoulders, another clown had walked past and said, "Save it for the ring." "There was a very jaded quality, like, 'I'm going home to get drunk,'" he said. "That struck me. I don't get being jaded."

But within a few years, Boswick saw something begin to change in the way the public thought about clowns. Some of the blame went to John Wayne Gacy, the prolific serial killer who had moonlighted as a clown named Pogo and later sold clown paintings from his cell on death row. Stephen King's

**"I want respect,
and I don't want respect.
If you respect the
clown, the clown's doing
something wrong."**

novel *It*, featuring the demonic Pennywise, lodged the idea of the evil clown more firmly in pop culture. The internet rendered it contagious. BuzzFeed regularly posts items like "Insane Clowns Are Haunting Southern California" and "21 Vintage Clown Photos That Will Make Your Skin Crawl." The possessed clown doll that had a cameo in the original *Poltergeist* was front and center on the posters for the film's reboot this month, and in September, Ten Speed Press will publish *When Clowns Attack: A Guide to the Scariest People on Earth*.

It's true that a clown's exaggerated face, both lifelike and not, is uncanny—one could argue it's inherently disturbing. There's also a cultural wariness, given the past decades' illumination of pedophilia, of men in masks touching other people's children. And professional clowns believe that the proliferation of untrained ones hasn't helped. "As with any art form, there's a lot of lousy clowns and mimes out there," says Steve Smith, a former dean of the Ringling Bros. Clown College who is now creative director of the Circus Center in San Fran-



cisco. The same whiteface that may look great from the nosebleed seats at Madison Square Garden can produce sensory overload in a small gathering of children. “There are these huge organizations that turn out a lot of people with good intentions but who have no barriers and will scare the hell out of you,” Smith says. “If you’re facing a 3-year-old, don’t hover over them, get down on your knees. If they scream, go away.”

Though Boswick and other clowns allow that some children are genuinely afraid of them, in their experience most are not. Instead, they see clown fear among adults as a lazy pose, a jokey affectation that has become easy to adopt as clowns fade into irrelevancy and the number of people who’ve seen one in real life dwindles. “It’s a designer phobia, really pretentious,” says Sparky, a clown who lives a block away from Boswick. “I can tell a person who has a clownaphobia right away if they have it; 99.9 percent are phony. I’ve met maybe

of condoms, growling, “Hey, nice tits!” and telling off-color clown jokes.

Still, the denigration of clowns has had real-world consequences, and Boswick, like other children’s entertainers, has been forced to adapt. In the early ’90s, after seven years as a traditional whiteface clown, he switched, as nearly all clowns outside the circus now have, to less obtrusive makeup with a flesh-tone base. For his many appearances at libraries, Boswick has made putting on his makeup part of the show. For birthday parties, he now, like Funnybone, explicitly markets himself as wearing “kid-friendly makeup.” And among the list of “hints” he sends schools in advance is: “If there is a child that is afraid of clowns, let them watch Boswick from a distance. I promise, they will join the other children.” As parents booking children’s parties increasingly request clowns without makeup or, worse, magicians, Boswick has lately been trying on a new makeup-less character with a sort of 1870s-steamboat-gambler look, and he’s been boning up on his sleight-of-hand skills.

A real clown, as Boswick sees it, can survive the stripping away of makeup and costume and balloons and juggling and magic; an irreducible nub of clownness will remain. It’s a kind of comedic physicality combined with an unshakable commitment to the reality of the character’s world.

Like Einstein’s insane person, he’ll do the same thing over and over expecting a different result—assuming a chair will be beneath him, even though it wasn’t last time. Boswick’s favorite example of a non-obvious clown is Stephen Colbert, at least as he was on *The Colbert Report*: The suit and tie and combed hair were “a little too perfect,” and he never, ever broke character.

But Boswick still struggles with the trend away from makeup. Wearing the clown nose “just works so much better for me,” he said. Recently, bare-faced at an 11-year-old girl’s birthday party, he teased her about her “boyfriend”—boilerplate Boswick shtick—and then apologized for not checking to see whether her Facebook page listed her relationship status as “It’s complicated.” “The dad’s like, ‘Hey,’” Boswick said. “I’m like, *Oh, yeah, this joke is coming off weird, oh, wow ...* With the makeup, half my show is Harpo Marx stuff, chasing grandmothers around and flirting and making jokes. The other day, doing those jokes without makeup, I was half-creepy. A friend of mine said recently,

‘Maybe you’re being lazy with the comedy.’ I said, ‘No, I just feel so much more free with makeup.’ Without makeup, there are a lot more rules I have to follow. As the clown, I can break all the rules.

“I want respect, and I don’t want respect,” Boswick continued. “I want respect for who I am and my résumé and how hard I work, how many classes I’ve taken, and at the same time I think respect for clowning is the dumbest thing in the world. Why would you have respect for clowns? Clowns are the ones who’re making fun of the world. If you respect the clown, the clown’s doing something wrong.”

O

N A RECENT Saturday morning, David Magidson walked into his bathroom but nothing came out. “Stage fright,” he said, reemerging into the hallway in his apartment. He’s still unjaded. He knows what a big deal it is for parents to hire Boswick. He knows

the stress of wanting to throw a successful party and how important it is to them that their children be entertained and feel loved. And so he still gets nervous before every gig, including the three he had lined up that afternoon.

Magidson is a 52-year-old husband and father of two boys, which makes him a rarity among the clowns he knows, few of whom are married and none of whom have kids. He’s also the owner of a rambunctious dog, Dewey DeGrasse Tyson, who wouldn’t stop jumping on him as he morphed, beneath his peeling bedroom ceiling, into Boswick. He started by pulling on one of his more than 30 pairs of *Simpsons* boxer briefs—“‘Cause you have to be funny all under”—and a pair of knee-high candy-cane socks. His belief in character integrity extends to wearing real hats and clothing with actual pockets. “Amateur clowns have lots of pockets that don’t work and cute flowers. I’m like: *No*. They pin on their hats. I’m like: *Nope, not for me*.”

As Magidson put on his face, standing before a mirror in the chartreuse bathroom he shares with his wife, he applied the same philosophy, painting his own nose red before gluing a red plastic clown nose over it. In this he was following Ringling tradition, as well as forestalling inadvertent glimpses of the man behind the makeup. “Kids will say, ‘You’re not a real clown.’ It’s very strange. How do you answer that one, ‘cause what is a clown?’”

Boswick steered the Yaris south toward San Jose. Even when he’s driving, he tries to keep a smile on his face, but this effort is

“If there is a child that is afraid of clowns, let them watch Boswick from a distance,” the tip sheet reads. “I promise, they will join the other children.”

two people who have it. If they have it, they apologize profusely. The other ones go, ‘Oh, clowns are scary, that’s spooky.’” Boswick’s good friend Funnybone, who has worked in South America and Asia, says, “You go to another country, that concept of being afraid of clowns is nowhere. When I worked in Japan, I wore full clown makeup. It really is just something that’s happened here.”

Boswick isn’t hung up on the innocence of clowns. While some of his peers have gone as far as to protest unflattering portrayals—most recently, the amateur group Clowns of America International denounced *American Horror Story: Freak Show*’s Twisty, a disfigured and brain-injured kidnapper and murderer—Boswick is a fan of *It* and impersonated Twisty for an *AHS*-themed Halloween haunted house for a South Bay tech company. “I love scary clowns, and I think it’s all part of the big universe of what I do,” Boswick told me. He himself invented a character for a nightclub gig, Nasty Ass the Clown, who walks around chomping on a Tiparillo cigar, tying balloon animals out

sometimes derailed by his devotion to Howard Stern's radio show. "When there's swearing and stuff going on, and I'm going through a toll booth or getting gas, and it's roaring out my window, I'm like: *God, I've got to turn this down, I'm a clown.*" Entering the parking lot for his first performance of the day—4-year-old Izabela's birthday party at a Jewish Community Center in Los Gatos—he called her mother, Shelley, to let her know to prepare the kids for his arrival. Boswick has learned, over the years, that the show begins before he enters the room, and the tip sheet he always sends in advance contains hard-won wisdom like "Feed the children before the show" and "Don't give noisemakers to the children." He likes there to be a sense of anticipation when he appears.

Immediately upon entering, he called the children, who had been jumping in a bouncy castle, to gather around him. "Come closer," he said, and they did. "No, back." They retreated, giggling. "No, closer. No, back." And so on, and for the next hour he performed the remarkable feat of holding the attention of a group of 4-year-olds and making them laugh for much of that time. Boswick's act consists in large part of behaving like an idiot. He mixed up the kids' names (Hannah became Harmonica and Hanukkah, Izabela became Is It a Bell?, Shaya became Shia LaBeouf), their sexes ("This boy is a girl?"), their relationships ("This is your husband?"), their ages (the 4-year-old was 14? Forty?). He got angry at misbehaving inanimate objects (a top hat that kept falling off, juggling clubs that dropped to the floor or hit him in the head, balloons that snapped back on him or flew away before he could tie them off). He performed a few

bona fide magic tricks that caused the kids to gasp, and he was liberal with potty humor, coaxing the kids into sitting on whoopee cushions, making flatulent balloon noises and waving away imagined gas clouds, confusing "blue" with "poo," pretending to throw up, and putting a diaper on the birthday girl's head.

A lot of this is Clown 101, and a good bit of it is Boswick. "Boswick," Boswick told me later, "is bringing out my own insecurities and making them big. Pointing out the top of my head in shows, having the kids call me Baldy. My hair is a big deal. I'm not sure I would have become a clown if I had normal hair. It's near bald, which I hate hate hate hate hate, yet love love love love love as a clown."

In Izabela's show, there was a fair amount of good old circus skill at work—the magic, the juggling, and balloon-tying, which went on for more than half an hour at the end—but a significant part of Boswick's artistry is how he manages the room. He made the kids the stars of his show ("It's a pet peeve of mine, people don't get how to use an audience volunteer"), threw the occasional bone to the adults standing around (quipping about Christopher Guest, "shvitzing" and "upstaging," and trying to cha-cha with a grandmother), and above all demonstrated a canny grasp of child development. He knows that most card tricks are beyond the ken of little brains that don't understand the difference between a heart and a spade, and also that within just a few years, his audience will roll their eyes at the same magic tricks that dazzle them now. He knows that there is no joke, with the 4-to-7 crowd, that can't be beaten further into the ground.

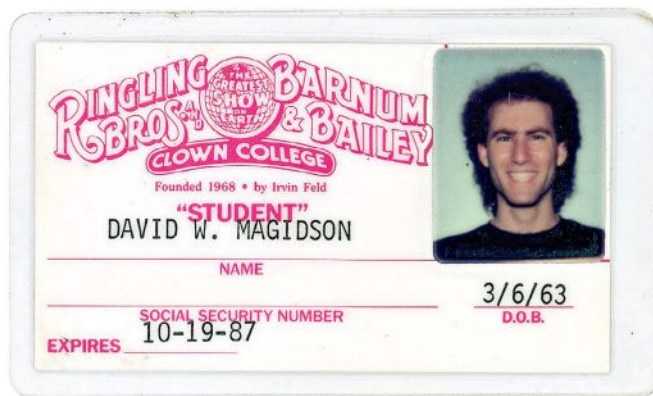
"You were great, sir," Izabela's grandfather told Boswick after the show was over.

"You really got the kids entertained." Boswick hears variations on "Everyone loves a clown" from 70-somethings all the time. They, and their young grandchildren, are alike in not cracking wise about clowns. (They are perhaps the only ones innocent of shareable slideshows about creepy clowns.) Izabela and her peers appeared to either love Boswick or find him somewhat disquieting, frequently hilarious, and impossible to turn away from. Throughout San Francisco and its suburbs, Boswick has superfans, who show up regularly at his library shows. "In certain circles, he's a celebrity," his wife told me. "Most of those people are between 4 and 6." Fern Charles, who is 9, first had Boswick at her 4th-birthday party. "I think he was very vulnerable, that's the role he played, and I think that appealed to my daughter," said Fern's mother, Kristin. Fern has since had Boswick at her 5th-, 6th-, 7th-, 8th-, and 9th-birthday parties, too. "She said: 'I want Boswick to be at my parties until he's no longer a clown,'" Kristin said. Fern has no awareness of a world in which clowns are anything other than lovable, but her parents know that not everyone shares her attitude. "We warn people who haven't been to one of her parties that Boswick will be there," Kristin said.

After saying good-bye to Izabela and her friends, Boswick took advantage of the JCC bathroom to wash his hands. "Cause kids skeeve me out quite a bit," he said. "The older I get, the more I'm becoming, like, OCD, which is really weird, because look at what I do, what I'm around." The kids touch everything. They lick the balloons. They spit on the cake when they try to blow out the candles. Back in the car, Boswick rubbed some off-brand sanitizer on his hands.

Though the show was by all measures a success (Shelley, Izabela's mother, would later send Boswick a gushing email), Boswick tends toward self-criticism, and as he ate a postshow sandwich in the Yaris, he was already nitpicking. The party music, weirdly dirgelike at times, had been an energy killer; the layout, with adults standing distractingly behind him, was diffuse; his new plastic nose, pressing against his face, was making his actual nose run; and the kids hadn't eaten beforehand, so he had to rush the show at the end. One thing he did like was how the mother had taken a lot of pictures, over his shoulder, of the kids' reactions. He thought he might add that to his tip sheet.

The next gig, a house party in San Jose for the birthday of a 7-year-old boy named Chase, began inauspiciously. Before Boswick had even entered the house, a mother in the backyard told another mother that she "never liked" (Continued on page 114)



Boswick at Clown College in Venice, Florida.



We're No.

Can Lyft pull an Avis?

By ANNIE LOWREY

JOHN ZIMMER IS ONE OF THE TWO FOUNDERS of the ride-sharing service Lyft, and on a hazy spring afternoon, he was standing on the top of one of San Francisco's highest hills—amid multimillion-dollar homes and cypress trees, the whole city sprawled out before him—trying to get a ride back to the start-up's offices in the Mission District. The service offers both carpooled and private rides, and he opted for the former. “We got a match with Amanda!” Zimmer said. “Larry’s going to pick up Amanda first.” 🚗 Minutes later, a Subaru arrived, driven by a grizzled documentary filmmaker, with a silent young woman with swooping bangs and chipped nail polish in the back seat. After hopping in the front, Zimmer asked Larry how long he had been driving with Lyft, engaging in some secret-shopper-style market research. (Larry did not realize Zimmer is Lyft’s president.) “Just about four weeks. So, I’m a newbie,” Larry responded. 🚗 “And how do you like it so far?” 🚗 “I like it very well,” Larry said, explaining that he had ended up with a little too much income tax due this year and was using Lyft to bump up his earnings. “It’s perfect. It’s filling in the gaps right now.”

PHOTOGRAPH: COURTESY OF TOYOTA. PHOTO-ILLUSTRATION BY ALLEN CHIU.



Larry pointed out the Uber offices as we drove past them, and Zimmer gently asked whether he had ever driven for the company. Just for a week, Larry said. “I didn’t like Uber much,” he said. “I figured I was going to try both anyway, but I prefer the way that Lyft interacts with the drivers better.”

“Was there a difference in the passenger experience?” Zimmer asked, his tone a Californian meld of earnestness and nerdery.

“From my point of view, there wasn’t,” Larry said. “I do hear that people prefer Lyft, or they’ll just take whichever service is cheaper at the time. I guess it depends what you’re looking for. If you just want to get from point A to point B, it doesn’t matter if the driver is friendly or not.”

Throughout the winding ride into the Mission, Amanda remained silent, tapping on her iPhone, treating it more like a cab ride than a social occasion. Eventually, Zimmer turned to her, asking how long she had used the service. “Two years?” she responded, finally looking up. “I deleted Uber a year ago. I just had so many bad experiences. Driver not saying I got out of the car when I got out of the car, and driving around for a few more blocks to overcharge me. Happened like three times in a row. And then they’d just be very rude to me. They’d call and say I’m not where I said I was. And I’d say, ‘I’m standing where my pin is!’ I’m very on top of that,” she said, pausing for a beat. “Just generally being assholes.”

Zimmer flashed a smile at the answer. The company he built is the pink, fuzzy alternative to black, sleek Uber. Its founding tagline is “Your Friend With a Car,” whereas Uber’s is “Everyone’s Private Driver.” Lyft prides itself on providing a friendly, even fun service, rather than a silent luxury ride, and on building a community of drivers and passengers.

And yet the truth is that in many ways Larry is right, too: A lot of people trying to get from point A to point B see more similarities than differences between Lyft and Uber. This has helped make the rivalry between black and pink among the most heated in San Francisco: a big-moneyed battle for ride-sharing supremacy in which one participant is conspicuously overmatched. (Forget traditional taxis—they’re considered hopeless.)

To date, Uber has raised more than \$5 billion and is valued at around \$50 billion. Approaching an expected mega public offering, it is known to be one of the most aggressively successful start-ups to have emerged in the postrecession era. Lyft has raised \$1 billion and is worth about \$2.5 billion. Though it is headed toward profitability, it is still spending large sums to attract drivers and passengers. At the same time, Uber is spending even larger sums in an effort to become an on-demand logistics and transportation behemoth, in part by eroding Lyft’s driver and customer base.

Can Lyft survive as No. 2? What could make it No. 1? Or should it become a different product altogether? Those are the kinds of existential questions being hashed out in Lyft’s San Francisco headquarters, and among investors wondering whether to bet on the underdog. To better compete, Lyft is adding new services, refining its image, trying to position itself as the more lovable brand for riders and drivers. It has swelled to over 450 employees, with executives hired from Google, Virgin America, Netflix, and Facebook. It just raised a small war chest of its own, including \$100 million from the infamous activist investor Carl Icahn.

“There’s a secular change going on, particularly with respect to urbanization,” Icahn told me, “and that creates tremendous potential for Lyft. There’s room for two, maybe three competitors in the area.” Icahn could be right: The economy may be changing fast enough, and the marketplace may be large enough, for a company that embraces Silicon Valley’s most utopian impulses to thrive against the most megalomaniacal of competitors.

But skepticism abounds. “If you really look at this thing, it’s not gonna be a two-horse race. Lyft doesn’t survive. And Travis is



▲ Uber commissioned anti-Lyft billboards ...

never gonna buy it,” Chris Sacca, a prominent Uber investor, told Bloomberg TV, referring to Travis Kalanick, Uber’s co-founder. “This is a winner-take-all game. And Travis will take all.”

Some Lyft investors are careful not to describe their company as second to anyone. “We would never invest if we thought the company was destined to be No. 2 in the space,” says Andreessen Horowitz’s Scott Weiss, who sits on Lyft’s board.

Tech start-ups are often terrified of being No. 2 in part because of what economists call “network effects”: The bigger company might keep getting bigger, just because it is bigger. It helps to explain the monopoly-like dominance of Amazon, Google, Facebook, and perhaps, one day, Uber. More users on Uber means more drivers on Uber means shorter wait times on Uber means more users on Uber. And so Lyft is trying very hard to convince you that it offers a fundamentally different ride.

KALANICK AND HIS co-founder, Garrett Camp, dreamed up Uber after they found themselves stuck in Paris, unable to hail a taxi. Lyft took its inspiration from the ingenuity of the impoverished people of Zimbabwe.

In 2005, Zimmer’s co-founder, Logan Green, traveled there as a college student at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He found that, instead of a taxi service with meters, lights, and dispatchers, Zimbabweans had created an informal shuttle economy: Your friend with a microbus would pick up you and some others and drop you off for a fee. “It was this resource-sharing born out of necessity,” Zimmer told me, walking the warehouse-dotted blocks of Lyft’s neighborhood with an iced coffee in hand.

At the time, Zimmer was studying hotel administration at Cornell and having an opposite epiphany about American resource use. “A hotel is considered a failure if it has less than a 60 percent occupancy rate, and yet there are all these cars driving around with a 20 percent occupancy rate,” he said. Most Americans, when they drive, drive alone.

After finishing college, Zimmer worked for Lehman Brothers in New York and Green worked on urban-transit issues back in Santa Barbara, but both kept thinking about ride-sharing. In 2007, Zimmer saw a Facebook post of Green’s about starting a company dedicated to using all that excess room in America’s cars—a prospect that could free up an extraordinary amount of cash for Americans, take hundreds of thousands of vehicles off the road, and provide an income for drivers. That idea became a ride-sharing



▲ ... And Lyft responded in kind.

business called Zimride, with the “Zim” standing for “Zimbabwe.”

Thrown together in a few weeks by a tiny team, Zimride launched in 2007 on college and corporate campuses, targeting drivers heading to, say, New York from Ithaca, or to Los Angeles from Santa Barbara. A \$250,000 investment by Facebook’s fbFund persuaded Zimmer to quit Lehman and head to Palo Alto. (Lehman collapsed shortly thereafter.) From the outset, the business was a social, community-focused one: Classmates would organize rides via Facebook, with the assurance that the other people in the car went to their school. “It was this radical, even dangerous idea, getting in a car with a complete stranger,” Zimmer said. “Facebook helped you get over that.”

At the same time, about 30 miles north in San Francisco, Kalanick and Camp were thinking about American vehicular resources along the same lines as Zimmer. Black cars often sat idle. Why not make a smartphone app to put them to use, letting riders hail them for short hauls at a cut rate? That service, of course, became Uber, which launched in San Francisco in 2010 and scaled up frighteningly fast, quickly hitting a million rides.

Zimride was a more modest success—its rides measured in the thousands. In part inspired by Uber, in part nudged by the new ubiquity of smartphones, Zimmer and Green decided to try to facilitate on-demand short trips via Zimride too with a product called Zimride Instant. Rebranded as Lyft, it launched in San Francisco in 2012, and by the next year they had sold the original, long-haul concept to Enterprise, the rental-car company.

At the beginning, Lyft was easily recognized as the anti-Uber. I remember a close friend—a free-love, hug-everyone resident of the Mission—telling me about it for the first time. A random person with a car would come get you. You’d recognize the car by the giant pink mustache attached to the grill. You’d hop in the front seat. You’d fist-bump the driver. You’d go where you needed to go. At the end, you’d leave a “donation” to cover the cost of the trip. To help average Americans get over the perceived danger of getting in a car with a stranger, Zimmer and Green contemplated making the service all-female. “Our girlfriends and female employees counseled against it,” he said. The hyper-friendly pink branding stuck.

As both companies flourished in San Francisco, their business models rapidly converged. Uber announced Uber X, with lower-priced fares; like Lyft, it lets anyone apply to be a driver. By early 2014, Lyft had ditched the donation model for set pricing, like Uber’s. They both started offering carpooling services to attract commuters and people taking taxis to and from airports. Later that year, Lyft let its passengers know that it was fine to sit in the back.

“Lyft has discovered that the Uber model works,” says Harry Campbell, a Lyft and Uber driver who writes the popular blog the Rideshare Guy. “A lot of people just want a safe, clean ride. Passengers value that frictionless, more businesslike approach that Uber has. They overwhelmingly prefer that experience.”

Now, in many markets, Lyft and Uber can feel identical. Lots of drivers use both and make roughly the same amount. (Lyft and Uber both normally take a 20 percent commission; Lyft drivers can receive tips through the app, though not all passengers leave one.) Many passengers ride with both, and in many cities, the pricing, wait times, and user experience are comparable. For instance, coming into San Francisco from the airport, I hailed a car with the Uber app, waited a few minutes, and sat in the back when my car arrived. The ride was with a driver named George. We chatted a little. I dozed off at some point. This cost \$37.62. Headed back to the airport, I took a ride with a Lyft driver named Victor. The drive was a bit longer, and the fee a bit heftier because of “prime time” pricing, Lyft’s equivalent of Uber’s “surge” pricing. I sat in the back. We chatted a little. I dozed off at some point. This cost \$49.20.

While our conversation with Larry and Amanda may have highlighted the Lyft difference, another ride Zimmer and I took, with a former taxi driver who now works for both Lyft and Uber, highlighted the opposite. “I have both apps running at the same time, so I just take whatever’s closer to me or whatever makes sense,” he said.

“Do the experiences seem similar to you? Is there any difference?” Zimmer asked hopefully. “Lyft are a little more friendly in general. Uber is a little more quieter, professional types,” he responded.

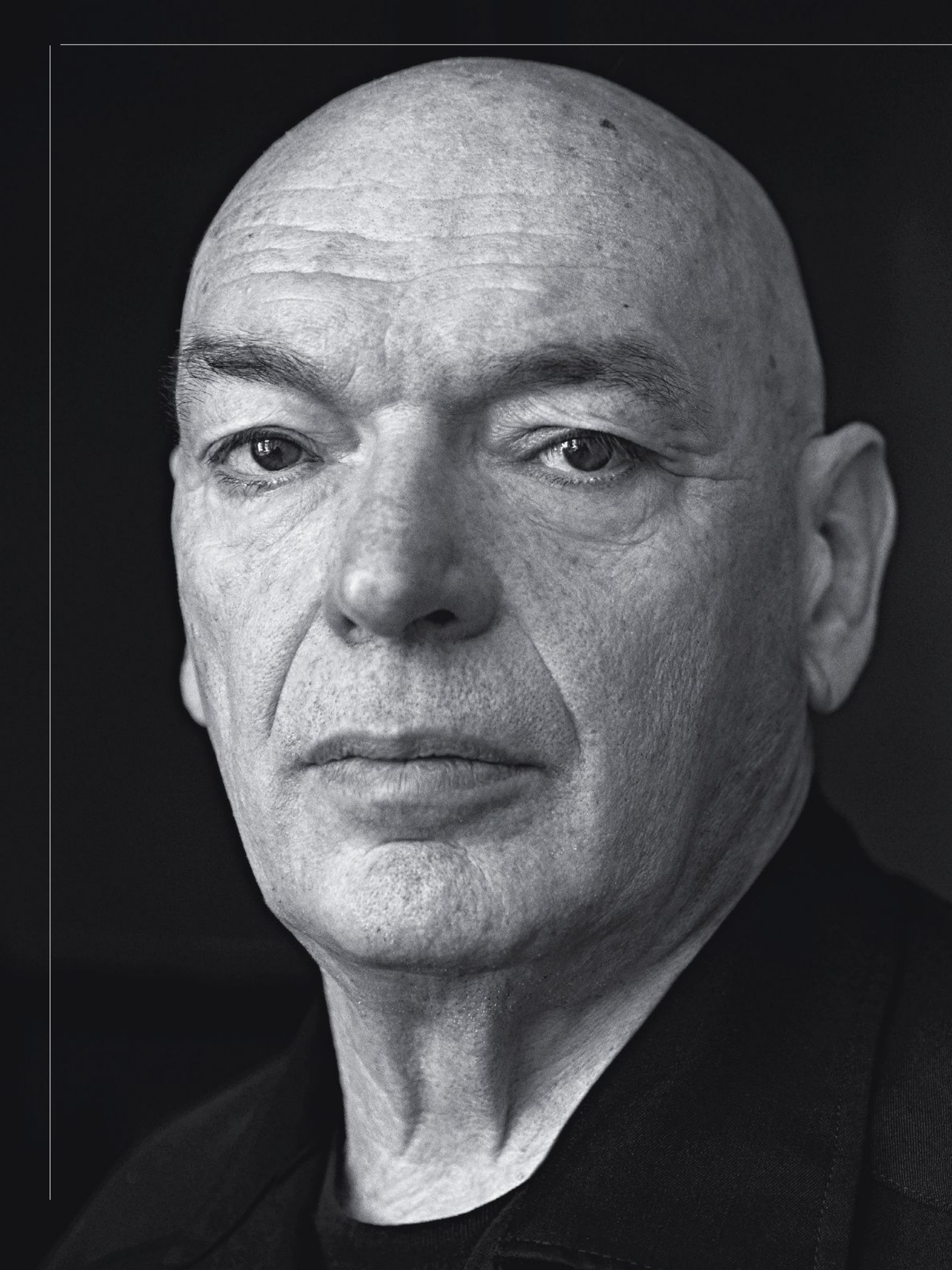
The battle between the two companies has gotten brutal, bitter, even a little juvenile. Last year, a Lyft analysis allegedly showed that Uber employees had requested and canceled some 5,560 rides on Lyft, annoying drivers and delaying rides for thousands of other passengers. (Uber has denied the allegation—and claims Lyft has done the same to it. Which Lyft denies.) The website *The Verge* revealed that in an operation code-named SLOG, Uber gave independent contractors burner iPhones and company credit cards. The contractors would request Lyft rides and then attempt to recruit the driver to the black side once in the car. (“We can’t successfully recruit drivers without talking to them—and that means taking a ride,” Uber responded.) At one point, Uber put out mobile billboards in San Francisco reading SHAVE THE STACHE—a reference to Lyft’s iconic pink mustache. Lyft later parked a huge

“Do the experiences seem similar to you? Is there any difference?” Lyft’s president asked a driver hopefully.

teal BE MORE THAN A NUMBER billboard outside Uber’s office.

Both companies have been forced to shell out millions of dollars to win over passengers and, crucially, drivers. A service’s success in a given city depends deeply on whether rides are available when riders start requesting them; nobody wants to wait 20 minutes for a car. To ensure that supply, in certain cities and periods Lyft offers up to \$750 in cash to new drivers and guarantees them \$1,200 a week. Uber also pays hefty recruitment and referral fees and \$500 bonuses to drivers who worked with another ride-sharing platform and switched over.

(Continued on page 116)



IT'S FASHION WEEK ON THE RUE Saint-Honoré in Paris, and a black-clad mountain of a man lumbers through a hotel lobby full of preening gazelles. His long coat sweeps a Champagne flute off a coffee table and into a young woman's lap. He makes vague blotting motions, as if he could soak up the Champagne remotely, then gives up and moves on. His assistant grabs a napkin and administers a few firm dabs and profuse apologies. She, too, moves on, following her boss into a private dining room for a working lunch. A few minutes later, a waitress pops in with an update: The young woman is fine, she's been given a new drink, and, in fact, "*Elle est ravie que ça soit vous*"—she's delighted to have been soaked by one of France's cultural treasures, the architect Jean Nouvel. ¶ In a nation that makes celebrities of its philosophers and literary critics, Nouvel is more than a designer of buildings; he's a curator of French architecture's cultural ambitions. His Philharmonie de Paris, which opened in January, embodies the desire to bridge the chasm between elite and popular music—or, depending on your politics, it's a state-sponsored boondoggle squandering fortunes on deluxe entertainment. The Musée du Quai Branly, a rust-colored museum of non-Western culture that crouches in the greenery near the Eiffel Tower, plunges into France's long and fraught debates over colonialism, Orientalism, and primitivism. His Louvre Abu Dhabi will bring a new cultural juggernaut to the Persian Gulf with the help of a French museum consortium and a French brand name.

Where
JEAN NOUVEL,
architecte
terrible, gets
all his
best ideas.

—
BY
**JUSTIN
DAVIDSON**

Paris Ag.Em

“My approach to architecture is tied to my European culture, my French upbringing, and my Parisian trajectory,” he says, studying the label on a bottle of Châteauneuf-du-Pape. “But I think it’s essential to merge an insider’s knowledge with an outsider’s perspective. Otherwise, you take too much for granted, and you fail to see what’s possible. Sometimes when you think you know a city, you don’t really know it at all.” Nouvel has a tendency to speak in gnostic generalities, but what he seems to mean is that intimacy with Paris has given him the grounding to work anywhere. Weaving around the constraints of history prepared him to be inventive with New York’s byzantine zoning code, and now, after nine years of dithering, his supertall 53 West 53rd Street, informally known as the MoMA Tower, is finally under construction. His “Parisian trajectory” has also propelled him into unexpected orbits. Ever since he came out of the blue to win a competition in 1981 for the Institut du Monde Arabe on the Left Bank, he has been a de facto interpreter of Islamic architecture. And not just in the West: When Qatar needed a national museum, it turned to him. Now he’s about to extend that idea to New York, designing an Islamic museum on Park Place, a successor project to the notorious “ground-zero mosque.”

What Paris has not bequeathed him is a style. He and his Pritzker-winning peers regularly come up against one another in purportedly anonymous competitions. The juries usually can guess whose work they’re seeing. Whereas Frank Gehry’s crinkly crumples and Zaha Hadid’s zip ribbons are instantly recognizable, Nouvel’s buildings are so distinct, and redefine their genres so thoroughly, that they don’t seem like products of the same imagination. “If they can’t figure out who it is, that means it’s me,” he says, laughing.

This ritualized global scavenger hunt for the building as artistic statement drives many critics crazy. To them, Nouvel and his ilk are irrelevant hucksters, sucking up resources to create buildings that are environmentally irresponsible, disdainful of their surroundings, indefensibly expensive to build, flamboyantly impractical to use. “Future architects will look back at our times astounded by our confusions, gullibility and inability to exercise critical judgment,” writes the British critic Peter Buchanan. It’s true that the planet has recently acquired an extensive collection of white elephants, some built at immense cost and then abandoned, others never finished at all. (Herzog & de Meuron’s “Bird’s Nest” Olympic Stadium in Beijing sits mostly unused and empty.) Yet to treat Nouvel’s work as nothing more than arrogant folly is to dismiss one of the era’s great practitioners. What makes him interesting is the interaction of his talent and his flaws—the fact that an architectural genius can also be an egomaniacal sculptor.

LUNCH IS AN IMPORTANT ritual in his workday, a discussion lubricated by copious amounts of wine. Often, it’s the first time his staff gets to see him, since he spends mornings in solitude. “I wake up, perform my little ablutions, then get back into bed with my eye mask on and my earplugs in, and I work. I imagine. I visualize. I create a film in my head.” Nouvel insists that there’s nothing meandering about these sessions: They’re intensive bouts of problem solving, preceded by weeks of preparation—but who’s to say if he dozes off? Before a morning in bed, he says, “I have to upload to my brain all the research, the constraints, the parameters. If I find that some parameters are missing, I get furious. Because then I can’t do my work.” By early afternoon, he’s ready to communicate the fruits of his meditation, sometimes with a rough sketch, more often with words. He and two or three of his staffers frequently retreat to his house in Saint-Paul de Vence, a picturesque hill town a few minutes from the Côte d’Azur, for what he calls *séminaires de brainstorming* that can consume as much as a third of the year. It’s calm there in the south, he tells me in a wistful way that makes me think of Baudelaire: “*Là, tout n’est qu’ordre et*

A MASTER WITHOUT A STYLE

“If they can’t figure out who it is, that means it’s me.”



1987
Institut du
Monde Arabe,
Paris



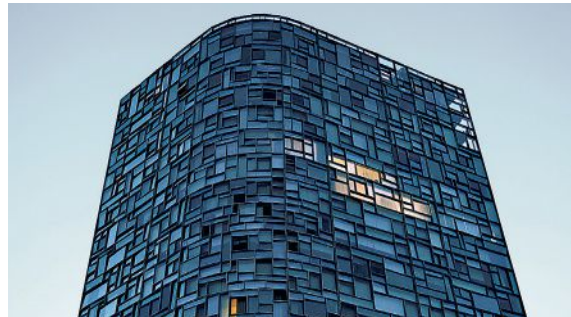
2005
Torre Agbar,
Barcelona



2006
Musée du
Quai
Branly,
Paris

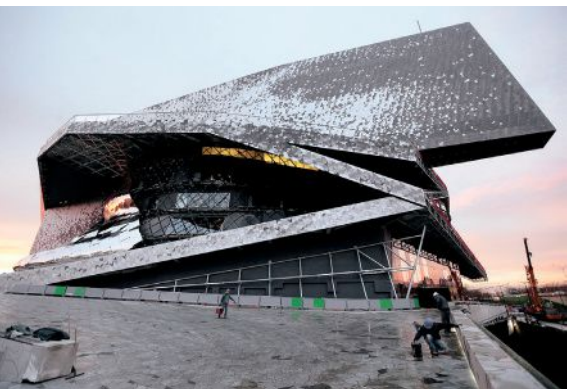


2010
100 11th
Avenue,
New York





←
2013
One Central
Park,
Sydney



←
2015
Philharmonie
de Paris



←
December
2015
Louvre
Abu Dhabi



←
Opening 2016
National
Museum of
Qatar,
Doha



←
Under
construction
National
Art Museum
of China,
Beijing

beauté, / Luxe, calme et volupté. (“There, all is order and beauty, / Luxury, peace, and pleasure.”)

It would be easy to deduce from this process that he dictates vague visions that his staff of 140 employees from 19 countries then converts into buildings with actual plumbing. That impression doesn’t survive a day I spend tagging along as he patrols his warren of offices, trundling from workstation to workstation and making his underlings tense up. He hovers and prods, often until 2 a.m., undoing three days’ work with a casual harrumph. His longtime employees learn to read his moods, which tend toward the saturnine. During his wanderings, he checks in on the progress of a hotel and convention center in Brussels, a conference building at the University of Chicago (an entry for a competition that he will later lose), his third stab at building a Paris skyscraper—on and on, like a traveler touring an imaginary city full of bright colors, ornamental screens, intricate patterns, and filtered light. He lingers for a while at one architect’s shoulder, fussing over dreamy renderings of the National Art Museum of China, in which figures glimpsed in a window seem to fade magically into the thickness of a stone wall. If the hyper-detailed imagery that chugs out of the office’s printers looks like the product of a Proustian reverie, it’s because that’s exactly what it is.

Nouvel was born in Gascony, the son of provincial teachers who deflected their artistic child away from painting and into the theoretically more stable life of an architect. He arrived at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris in 1967 and graduated three years later full of scorn for official aesthetics. He allied himself with distinguished rebels: the architect Claude Parent and the urban theorist Paul Virilio, who explored the toppled and shattered bunkers left by World War II and extrapolated an architecture of ramps and tilted walls. From the beginning, the young Nouvel was an organizer, caught up in the reformist spirit of the times. He co-founded an architects’ union, and the group Mars 1976, which aimed to undo the top-down planning principles that were turning every medium-size town in France into a carbon copy of the others. Even then, he was biting the hand of a generous government.

You might think that today such a laureled artist would do nothing but wait for a sheikh to call. That does happen from time to time, but at 69, Nouvel still struggles to keep his practice on a financial footing, still hustles for jobs, and still participates in the grueling, low-yield process of competitions. Partly that’s how the business works. (“The best business plan for an architect is not to be an architect,” an architect once told me.) In 1993, a bust in the French real-estate market doomed the skyscraper that he had expected to be his masterpiece and pushed the firm into bankruptcy. Nouvel turned to an old friend, Michel Pélassié, who rescued the business and ran it with a steady hand. By 2008, Nouvel was working not only on prestige projects but also on capitalist icons in desert cities: the “Green Blade,” a condo slab that looked like an enormous leafy iPhone rising above Century City, and a new MGM casino in Las Vegas. “We were flying high, we had doubled our space, we had hired new staff,” Nouvel recalls. Then came the recession. The two projects were scrapped on successive days. “And that was the beginning of the crisis. Three-quarters of our projects collapsed: *Boom, boom, boom, boom, boom*. Finished. Good-bye.”

The partners, friends for more than 40 years, started squabbling over money. Their relationship fell apart in 2012, with Nouvel accusing Pélassié of having pillaged the firm and Pélassié portraying his old partner as a naïf. “After his Pritzker, Jean lost all sense of reality,” Pélassié told *Le Parisien*. “Once, he listened to me. If a client said, ‘Nouvel’s changing something, and it’s going to cost us double!’ I was able to make him see reason. But then a while ago he started listening only to what was going on in his head.” Perhaps only in France could a lawsuit include the accusation that a CEO had beggared the company by paying for more than 14,000 bottles of wine that were both absurdly marked up and never delivered.

"We're in an epoch of savagery."

At the moment, Nouvel is consumed by disappointment over the Philharmonie, a divisive undertaking whose budget ballooned from a laughable \$160 million proposal to \$455 million by the time it opened, cementing his reputation for fiscal irresponsibility. When a left-wing government inherited the project from its right-wing predecessor, a fancy concert hall was judged to be a waste and would have been squelched, except that abandoning a half-finished ruin seemed even more wasteful. In order to control the damage, the government's appointed overseer, Patrice Januel, imposed budget cuts and design changes. The battle of similarly named egos fascinated the French press for years: Januel versus Jean Nouvel.

For decades, the now-90-year-old composer Pierre Boulez has been calling for the concert hall to be redefined, not just as a sacramental space for symphonies but as a round-the-clock complex, constantly alive with children and amateurs as well as professionals and connoisseurs. Nouvel translated Boulez's vision into a combination of school, museum, auditorium, and community center, located in the Parc de la Villette, near the working-class district of Pantin. The Périphérique, the city's multilane ring road, runs—or rather, crawls—right by, sundering the core from the impoverished *banlieues*. That highway has always been a psychological moat. The Philharmonie has taken on the task of bridging it with music.

To accomplish that feat of sociocultural engineering, Nouvel produced a stack of bent and folded planes, cut across with ramps, that look like the product of some epochal tectonic event. One vertical slab forms a giant screen that shows drivers on the ring road what they're missing; it's a live-feed billboard for classical music. The building, in its endearing awkwardness, is not an austere temple of art but a structure that invites the public to walk on it, mock it, use it, and even gently abuse it. Inside, it's a whorl of surfaces studded with little wood blocks that function the way plaster cherubs do in 18th-century theaters, diffusing the sound to give it a soft glow. I heard the Orchestre de Paris perform a program that covered a vast acoustic territory, from the soloists' murmurings in Beethoven's Triple Concerto to great cloud-parting shafts of sunlit brass in Bruckner's Ninth. The sound was so clear it seemed almost digital, with a light, warm wash of resonance. Boulez has yet to attend a performance there, but he might be pleased at what his polemics have wrought.

Nouvel, on the other hand, is miserable. At almost any mention of the Philharmonie, his shoulders slump and he passes one large hand over his glabrous scalp. Months after the opening, it was still a construction site, where workers waited each evening for the last notes to die out before rushing in to labor all night. He still despairs at all the corners cut, the mediocre workmanship, the design details that have been quashed, making the façade seem jittery and indistinct. The auditorium ceiling is plaster instead of wood. The lobby carpeting ... *apocalyptique*! I show him a snapshot I took in the men's room of a sign posted above the urinal: EAU NON POTABLE. Don't drink where you pee. He breaks out in a mournful laugh.

Nouvel might have put on a brave smile and chipped away at these details in closed-door conversations, but that is not his way. He attacked—in the pages of *Le Monde* and in court. The hall opened a week after the *Charlie Hebdo* massacre, a time when Paris needed succor, unity, and a celebration of humanism. Nouvel boycotted opening night. A few weeks later, he filed a lawsuit, claiming that the unfinished hall displayed "contempt for architecture, for the profession and for the architect of the most important French cultural program of the new century." The court was flummoxed,

ruling that it had no way to determine when an architect's work is no longer really his.

The experience has been tough on his pride, which he wears as ostentatiously as his black fedora. During an afternoon when we visit several of his Paris buildings, he nods benevolently to various fans and fawners, and he mentions casually that the previous evening, he stayed up late thumbing through a new book about him titled *Prince Jean*. But his boasting comes wrapped in insecurity. He's waiting anxiously to hear about a possible meeting with the Chinese president Xi Jinping to discuss his designs for the National Art Museum of China. "The president of China wants to talk to me, and here I can't get the ear of a two-bit bureaucrat," Nouvel says. "I guess it's true, no man is a prophet in his own land."

ANOTHER DAY, another lunch. Nouvel, accompanied by the Lebanese-born architect Hala Wardé, a longtime collaborator, and two other senior staffers, ducks through a velvet curtain into a small private dining room and immediately starts rearranging the tables. Ordering takes precedence over talk, but when the waiter finally disappears, Wardé spreads out a sheaf of drawings, diagrams, and construction photos of the Louvre Abu Dhabi, which Nouvel will be visiting in a few days.

"There's an executive meeting, all the VIPs will be there, and they want to celebrate progress on the dome," she says. The waiter comes back with the wine, and Wardé pauses while Nouvel examines the label. Then she continues: "Everyone is pleased, and they want to know you are too."

"Which means they want concessions," Nouvel grumbles. "What are they asking for?"

As they work their way through her list—the thickness of paving stones, the gangplanks in the marina, the seating in the bar area, the placement of cooling ducts, whether ceiling panels in the museum lobby should be removable or fixed—Nouvel interprets each question as a money-saving assault on his design. He sits impassively, occasionally glancing from his food to a drawing that the other architects brandish like courtroom evidence. The contractor has specified a revolving steel gate like the ones in the New York subway. Nouvel's staff has designed a more elegant—and more expensive—alternative.

"So you want to cage people in the nicest possible way?" Nouvel asks. "What's the cost difference?"

About \$40,000, Wardé estimates.

"That's not much. The cost of a small car."

"Actually, that's a really nice car," Wardé protests. "A Mercedes, at least."

Nouvel waves the issue away with his wineglass. "A cage is a cage. I don't really care."

His responses are tactical: Fall back on the turnstiles; hold firm on the ceiling panels. As the conversation gets more and more technical and the minutiae minuter, Nouvel mentions that I have visited the Philharmonie. Wardé shudders. "It's terrifying," she says. "You see the kind of questions we discuss, and you realize what can happen if you let go."

The Louvre project sounded insane from the beginning: Turn a desert island off the coast of Abu Dhabi into a new Venice, with cultural institutions arrayed along a grand canal. The Emirates' Tourism Development and Investment Company (TDIC) asked Zaha Hadid to design a performing-arts center, Norman Foster to

build a national museum, and Frank Gehry to produce a new Guggenheim. It gave Nouvel a central site for a museum of world civilizations. Even before Nouvel helicoptered to the barren patch of sand—and long before he knew what art the museum would contain or where it would come from—he sketched an idea: a cluster of sugar-cube-like blocks beneath a shallow dome. As the design developed, the white gallery buildings, separated by seawater and linked by walkways, came to resemble an Arab city on steroids, the huddled houses of a medina inflated to palatial proportions. A perforated cupola, supported by four thick columns hidden inside the buildings, seems to float above, a forest canopy in a treeless region. The Arabian sunshine, after dodging eight layers of woven steel, throws luminous splashes on the walls and floors, mottled patterns that change minute by minute. It's a modern incarnation of the *mashrabiya*, the ornamental screen that's common in Islamic architecture.

Though Nouvel chafes against the relative powerlessness of the architect, it can also be a useful defense, particularly when it comes to the treatment of construction workers on the Louvre site. To the rest of the world, Nouvel may seem to be building a temple of vanity on someone else's dime. To the client—a complex tangle of the TDIC plus the Louvre plus all the contractors—he's a deluxe version of a hired hand, paid to provide a service and go home. When I press him about the workers' conditions, he shrugs. "They took me on a tour of their housing, and it looked fine," he says. "It's not in anyone's interest to exploit workers." Which actually means it's not in his interest to know any more than he has to.

Last November, Wardé presented Nouvel's Louvre designs at a Columbia conference about the architecture of the Arab city. It was rough going. What, some participants asked, did Nouvel think he was doing, importing his Parisian-flavored Orientalism into a part of the world he barely knew? When I ask him a similar question months later, Nouvel recognizes that building a Louvre on a sandbar is *un peu fou*—"a little crazy." He summarizes the criticism in tones of mock outrage. "*What's wrong with these people that they want to create a system of grand museums? That's Europe, that's us! They don't even have a collection! They have to buy everything from scratch!*" I find that an incredible reaction," he continues, pointing out that a little over a century ago, another newly wealthy, culturally insecure city was frantically founding museums and shopping to fill them: New York. "All cities, when they reach their golden age, construct for their people and for their culture, to bear witness to their epoch. It's perfectly logical."

One of the paradoxes of Nouvel's architecture is that while clients come begging for uniqueness—and some critics see a portfolio of sore thumbs—he lets the surroundings shape his buildings. He proudly calls himself a contextualist, before going on to clarify that the term doesn't—or shouldn't—mean replicating existing styles, but rather letting the location's idiosyncrasies permeate the design. The vast majority of today's architecture, he fumes, is *parachuté*: generic forms inserted into a site without regard to climate, culture, or context. "We're in an epoch of savagery. Developers have usurped the role of architects, so who will defend the pleasure of living in a particular place? It's a fundamental question. Places are not interchangeable. Living somewhere means everything you experience outside, the people you meet, the way you move around—the whole atmosphere of a city in all its complexity."

Still, what Nouvel calls contextualism others see as cultural cliché. "If you're in Africa, suddenly you start doing tribal patterns," says Amale Andraos, the dean of Columbia's architecture school, "and in the Middle East you use the medina."

She acknowledges, though, that Nouvel deploys his references virtuosically. "He does his research, and the Islamic motif is not just a pattern that gets slapped on at the end. The screen really performs the way it was always supposed to, creating transparency and fragmenting light."

On our last evening together, Nouvel and I visit the Fondation Cartier, a building that distills the City of Lights into a structure of almost pure luminescence. At the opening cocktail party for a Bruce Nauman retrospective, artists, collectors, and art-world groupies press together in the glossy see-through art box that Nouvel designed more two decades ago and hasn't lost its diamondlike brilliance. Into this sparkling bubble shuffles the architect, looking, in his dark hat and coat, like a 3-D silhouette, or the looming killer's shadow in *The Third Man*. He's pleased to see the place so animated. Many architects imagine their creations pristine, free of humans, clutter, and trees. Nouvel, though, seems to like making regular visits to his projects as they age and alter and fill up with new generations who assume that the landmarks they grew up with have just always been there.

A couple of months later, Nouvel is in New York, and we meet for a quick lunch in a Soho hotel. Since I last saw him he's been to Abu Dhabi, Qatar, China, and Chicago, and now he's eager to get back home. "For architects who think that their primary job is to get work, travel is good. If you think that your primary job is working, it's not so good." His gaze wanders to the wall of the hotel lobby and lingers on a bright, seemingly random streak of white on white, which he mistakes for a design detail but turns out to be a glint of sunshine bouncing in from the street. "That's" (Continued on page 117)

Opening 2018
53 West
53rd Street,
New York





THE

MY FAVORITE SUIT

What makes a great bathing suit? A handful of swimmers and sunbathers were kind enough to show us the suits they love the most—whether they make them feel sexy or sporty or like a superhero.

Photographs by **BOBBY DOHERTY** *Interviews by* Katie Van Syckle

For more
FAVORITE
SUITS, go to
thecut.com.



Anna Martin
AGE: 33

THE JAGUAR '80S POWER BIKINI: I saw it at the Brooklyn Flea, and I couldn't not buy it. It was an event-specific purchase—I was going to Miami for the first time. Spring break for a 33-year-old. I'm not someone who lounges around in a bathing suit regularly. Finding a bathing suit that makes me feel good is not an easy task. But I bought this without even trying it on—if it didn't fit, it would have been a funny thing to have. But it ended up being perfect. As I've gotten older, I've figured out my body better.

*"I was going to Miami
for the first time.
Spring break for a
33-year-old."*



1

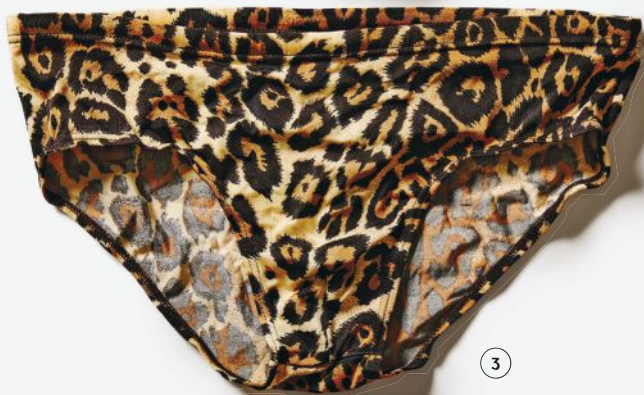


2

"We were a family of guilty sun-worshippers."



4



3

Gillian Laub
AGE: 40

1. Seeing photos of me in my Wonder Woman bathing suit makes me realize how empowered I felt wearing it. I remember going to sleepaway camp for the first time at age 6 and wearing this bathing suit all summer and swimming in the lake for the first time. I want to replace the elastic and have my daughter wear it when she's 6. 2. This was my grandfather's suit. My favorite memory of him is when we were on the beach in Naples, Florida, celebrating his 80th birthday:

I have this photograph of him eating a cheeseburger in his Burberry bathing suit, groaning with delight. 3. My father wore some really hilarious bathing suits. I don't think he meant for them to be funny, though. He did seriously wear this tight leopard-print one. My friends used to call him David Hasselhoff. 4. In the '80s my mom resembled Cher, and her clothes and bathing suits felt like she was channeling her. I thought she was very glamorous at the time.



*"I now buy tiny bathing suits because
I'm excited not to be chubby."*



**Stephanye
Watts**
AGE: 29

ANYTHING YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT ME is in that bathing suit. I used to be chubby. Thanks to walking in New York, I'm not anymore. I now buy tiny bathing suits because I'm excited not to be chubby. When I was bigger, I was wearing tankinis, and I hate those things. But even when I was bigger, I was really into my body. I like the way my body looks from when I was 170 to when I was at my smallest. I just like looking at it. I think I have always

been like that. I was an only child, and my whole thing was I always had myself. And I didn't grow up wearing a lot of clothes in the house. I love fashion, but I hate clothes. We just walked around the house in our underwear. It was never one of those things that I felt like I had to be really chaste about my body. Walking around in your underwear makes you feel fine as is.




“When I first heard about these bikinis I thought they would be frumpy and weird. They are actually very cool and sexy.”



Miki Meek
AGE: 36

THIS SUIT IS MADE BY A WOMAN NAMED Ambika Conroy in Woodridge, New York. I heard about her because I had gone to a swimming hole with some friends one weekend, and one of them said there was a woman who had 50 animals, and lives in the Catskills, and crochets these bikinis. She makes clothing from Merino sheep and Angora bunnies and goats. When I first

heard about these bikinis, I thought they would be frumpy and weird. They are actually very cool and sexy. The shorts have little ties at the side; you can tie it a bunch of different ways. It's great for lakes and swimming holes—you can't actually wear it in chlorine. I like her suits because the shorts are boyish. When I was a kid, I used to swim in a T-shirt and shorts, like my brothers.



*"I used to have
around 155 bathing suits. That was how
I expressed myself."*

J.J. Martin
AGE: 42

IT'S A VINTAGE LEONARD BATHING SUIT. I don't normally wear vintage bathing suits—there's something a little bit gross about it. But this one I found at a store in Genoa, and it is so retro '70s, and I think it's really fun. I feel like we all saw our mothers wearing those bathing suits when we were young. I grew up in L.A., where for the first 18 years of my life my uniform was a bath-

ing suit. I used to have around 155 bathing suits. That was how I expressed myself—there was no fashion in Los Angeles in the '80s; the only fashion was at Canyon Beachwear. As you get older, you're probably not trying to be sexy in your bathing suit. After 35, that's not really the point, so you might as well have some point, which is extreme comfort or a funny fashion moment.



BONOBOS

NOW OPEN

95 FIFTH AVENUE

AT THE CORNER OF 17TH STREET

STRATEGIST

..... BARS WITH VIEWS RIZZOLI REOPENS
LOOK BOOK MEETS A TRIBECA NATIVE PLATT ON UNTITLED
..... TASTING-MEET TASTE TESTS WALL PAINT, ARTIST PAINT, MIME PAINT

THE
BEST
BET

THE GOVAT. Find a pair of training flippers that will guide and correct any kid's kick and give an edge on the summer-beach-club competition circuit. Private instructors and Horace Mann swim coaches steered us away from long and flexible fins (too heavy for small feet) in favor of stiffer and shorter options that propel little bodies faster and adjust off-kilter strokes while mimicking the feel of a finless foot. THE VENDOR: The **Fins Positive Drive Fins** (\$18 at Leisure Pro, 42 W. 18th St.). Patented oval blade makes for the rare flipper that will transform an uneven breaststroke kick (the stroke with the trickiest mechanics) by forcing feet to flex inward as they push back, which builds power in the legs and makes it easier to kick both feet backward simultaneously. They're available for ages 3 and up, and the heel straps adjust.

BEST BETS

After closing its 57th Street shop, **Rizzoli** will reopen in late July (1113 Broadway, nr. 25th St.) with its original bookcases, chandeliers, and Serliana arch.

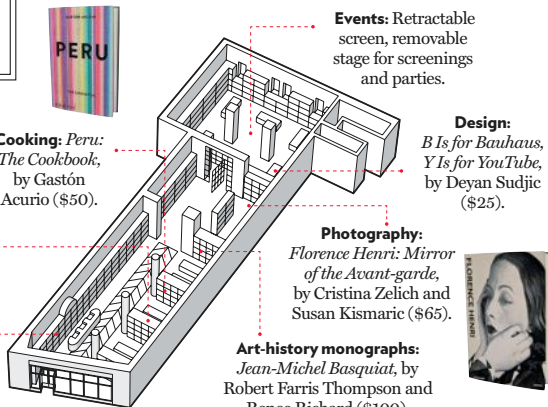


Cooking: *Peru: The Cookbook*, by Gastón Acurio (\$50).



Children and young adult: *Night Animals*, by Gianna Marino (\$17).

Italian newspapers: The daily *America Oggi* (\$2) and weekly *La Settimana Enigmistica* (\$4.25).



Events: Retractable screen, removable stage for screenings and parties.

Design: *B Is for Bauhaus*, *Y Is for YouTube*, by Deyan Sudjic (\$25).

Photography: *Florence Henri: Mirror of the Avant-garde*, by Cristina Zelich and Susan Kismaric (\$65).

Art-history monographs: *Jean-Michel Basquiat*, by Robert Farris Thompson and Renee Richard (\$100).



ASK A SHOP CLERK

In May, **Rachelle Dion** and **Heather Anne opened Sans Sucre Swimwear**, an appointment-only bikini concierge service.



What's a bikini concierge service? Tell us the size of your top (from \$95) and bottom (from \$75), and we come and lay out our entire mix-and-match collection. It started with us offering the service to guests at the Gansevoort Meatpacking, but we'll also come to your home for a 20 percent fee on top of the purchase price. We assess body type, skin color, hair color—in an intimate setting, it's easier to be honest about what will look best.

SIDE BY SIDE

➔ **Two new waterside bars for when the Frying Pan is all suits.**



BROOKLYN BARGE
3 Milton St., Greenpoint
Opens July 1

Pilsner and hot-sauce-spiked barg-eladas (\$9) and tequila-based Greenpoint Mules (\$10).

2,700 square feet of boozing space on a stationary flattop barge, plus 7,000 square feet of seating and a dock for water sports like kayaking and kids' sailing lessons.

Across the East River from the Brooklyn Bridge to the Upper East Side.



SWAN DIVE
480 Union St., Gowanus

Drink Grimm (\$6) and Peekskill Sour (\$5) beers brewed within a 50-block radius.

Play 13,000 square feet of outdoor space with Ping-Pong, cornhole, and baby back ribs smoked by BBQ supergroup Pig Beach.

See The canal, and, um, a Gowanus bus lot across the way.

TOP FIVE

➔ Eleven years after founding high-end décor brand **L'Objet à la Plage**, **Elad Yifrach** just opened his first brick-and-mortar outpost in Southampton (9 Main St.), selling his own designs alongside selections of beachy goods.



"This two-gear gold **Martone bike** (\$1,700) has a V that flips down, so it doesn't lean, it stands straight."



"This set of three **surfboards** (\$8,500) is also wall art. I love what the artist did with the Renaissance tapestry *Lady and the Unicorn*."



"The only jewelry I wear is Luis Morais. These **bracelets** (from \$195) are made of vintage beads—some are cut glass and some are real gold."



"We created these **bookends** (\$875) by plating the bronze sculptures in gold and adding the coral cabochons that are almost like ocean bubbles."



"The designer of these **Opiary Hoodoo stacks** (\$2,750) plays with iron mesh, forms it, and then pours concrete over it."

2x2

➔ Beach Umbrellas

Throwing shade.

EAST HAMPTON

ROCKAWAY BEACH

OVER \$100



Kerry Cassill beach umbrella, \$198 at shop.kerrycassill.com.



Basil Bangs X Gray Malin, \$249 at graymalin.com.

UNDER \$100



West Elm beach umbrella, \$30 at 112 W. 18th St.



Parasol Palapa Tiki Beach umbrella, \$81 at target.com.

MICROMARKET

Kid activities for grown-ups.

LASER TAG

Most Sundays this summer, the Highline Ballroom (431 W. 16th St.; 212-414-5994) transforms into Lazer Zoo, a 21-and-over laser-tag arena complete with oversize inflatable obstacles. Teams of five play five-minute games (from \$15); a balcony hosts DJs and a boozy brunch.

SLIP AND SLIDE

Slide the City's (slidethecity.com) 1,000-foot traveling slip and slide makes its way to the tristate area



this July with stops in Stamford, Secaucus, and, pending permits, Manhattan (from \$15).

ARCADE GAMES

The Riis Park Beach Bazaar (157 Rockaway Beach Blvd.) has arcade games like Ms. Pac-Man and House of Dead, alongside volleyball tournaments, roller skating, ultimate Frisbee, soccer, tennis, and pitch-and-putt (from \$13).

HIDE AND SEEK

This June, Escape Entertainment (39 W. 32nd St., fourth fl.; 646-964-5783) opened a slightly more playful take on Escape the Room where teams of up to ten have 60 minutes to escape one of three rooms: Monkey Mayhem, Prohibition Pandemonium, or Alien Attack (\$34 per person).

Z BEHL, Artist**What kind of name is Z?**

I was given the name Elizabeth, and when I was little I couldn't pronounce my L's, so I just called myself Z, and my parents were okay with it.

Where are you from?

I grew up in Tribeca—all my friends were kids of artists and musicians, and people didn't lock their doors. But I have some critical thoughts about growing up there: It wasn't a terribly diverse place, and there wasn't really exposure to anyone who hadn't made similar choices. But, you know, my parents tell me stories of going down to where Hudson River Park is now, and there was kind of this beach, and they'd do acid there along the Hudson River, and that sounds to me, like, I don't know ... heaven?

INTERVIEW BY
ALEXIS SWERDLOFF

**LIGHTNING ROUND****Neighborhood:**

Flatbush, Brooklyn.

Today's look:

"Lesbian cowgirl."

Roommates:

One. "My boyfriend. We got together in New Orleans; we made out through the skylight of my 1983 diesel Mercedes."

Favorite restaurant:

Ear Inn. "I get the steak and mashed potatoes."

Hair color:

"I use Sun In and the cheapest, strongest, lightest blonde hair dye."



Untitled

Monkfish at the Museum

With Untitled, Danny Meyer brings simple seasonal cooking and Saarinen chairs to the new Whitney.

BY ADAM PLATT

GIVEN THE ABUNDANCE of grand, sun-splashed spaces at Renzo Piano's new downtown Whitney museum, my first slightly churlish thought, upon settling into my Saarinen chair at the new house restaurant, Untitled, which opened on the building's ground floor not long ago, was that I would have liked a slightly better view. Sure, you can glimpse sideways at the river if you happen to be facing west, and if you're looking east, you can see the southern tip of the High Line, which is filled, during this summer season, with hordes of tourists trooping to and fro through the potted fauna. Unlike at the museum café upstairs, however, there are no breathtaking views of the harbor or of the condos sprouting up like cornstalks around the Meatpacking District, and unlike Danny Meyer's other celebrated museum restaurant farther uptown at MoMA, there isn't much art to gaze at while you peruse your compact, café-style menu.

But like I said, I'm being slightly churlish. The new restaurant at the new Whitney may not be a monument to the aesthetic glories of contemporary art and architecture ("I feel like I'm at one of the finer restaurants

in a Belgian airport," one of my guests remarked), but compared with the loud, poky little spaces that pass for first-class restaurants these days in the big city, it will do fine. Unlike some Saarinen chairs, these ones are comfortably upholstered and colored in a cheerful raspberry red. The blue-limestone floor doesn't do much to deaden the noise in the room on busy evenings, but the ceiling is as high as a cathedral, and it's surrounded by a tall glass wall on three sides. There's a white-oak bar in one corner of the room where you can sip a well-made Negroni after you've ambled around the galleries, and rows of café tables have been set up in the shadow of the building so you can sit outside and watch the river as it rolls down to the sea.

The menu at Untitled feels abbreviated by Meyer's lofty standards (there are five appetizers, five entrées, and assorted snacks and vegetables to pick at), but for a modest museum restaurant, the food, as orchestrated by the great Michael Anthony (Gramercy Tavern) and his talented chef de cuisine, Suzanne Cupps, packs a considerable punch. You won't get sheets of crackly flatbread sprinkled with bits of bacon and

sweet spring onions at, say, the American Folk Art Museum, I'm betting, or bowls of crab fritters, which are round and dense, like hush puppies, and served with a pink aioli that's whipped fresh and folded with bits of pickled Fresno pepper. The potato chips here are fresh fried instead of bagged—the ones served at the café upstairs with pimento-cheese dip are even better—and the excellent lobster toast is tossed with garlic scapes and ramps and spooned onto little triangles of brioche.

As is the custom at any Meyer operation, these carefully curated dishes are brought to the table by swarms of smiling hospitality professionals, wearing neatly pressed button-down shirts and the trademark butcher's bibs (which in this case are colored a modish Prada gray). On my visits, these cheery souls were gently pushing the fashionable vegetable section of the menu, and for good reason. Anthony is one of the city's great masters of seasonal, Slow Food cooking, and he and Cupps plate their garden greens in all sorts of tasteful and pleasing ways. Even the card-carrying carnivores at my table enjoyed the roasted beets (touched with buttermilk) and the cauliflower (caramelized, then served in a subtle coconut curry), but if you get just one dish, make it the leeks, which are seared to a kind of brûléed crunchiness, touched with oranges, and arranged on the plate in a decorative symmetrical pattern, like one of the art pieces upstairs.

None of the entrées at Untitled cost over \$27, and many of them are plated with the same kind of care as these vegetal compositions. The strips of thick, eggy stradette pasta might have worked better in a bowl

★★
Untitled
99 Gansevoort
St., nr.
Washington St.
212-570-3670
untitledat
thewhitney.com

★★★★ ETHEREAL

★★★★ EXCEPTIONAL

★★★★ EXCELLENT

★★ VERY GOOD

★ GOOD

NO STARS NOT RECOMMENDED

THE DISH

Chicharrón de Queso

The word *chicharrón* has evolved from strictly denoting fried pork rinds to a term that more generally evokes that food's crispy texture. Case in point: chicharrón de queso, the lacy shards of baked cheese that Marc Meyer serves as a snack at his new East Village restaurant Rosie's. A student of Mexican cuisine, Meyer encountered a dish with the same name but different composition in Mexico City, where cooks melted soft Chihuahua cheese and rolled it up on a tortilla with strips of pepper. His hybrid riff is less taco and more frico, the signature cheese crisp of Friuli, Italy. It's the ideal vehicle for salsa macha, an oily sauce perfumed with chiles and fortified with nuts and seeds. R.R. & R.P.

On the menu at **Rosie's**, \$8; 29 E. 2nd St., at Second Ave.; 212-335-0114.

(they're laid out like strips of unbaked pie crust on the plate), but that most aesthetically challenged of fish dishes, black bass, is balanced in a decorative way on top of a soothing broth filled with mushrooms and bulbs of bok choy. The monkfish Ms. Platt ordered one evening tasted almost like lobster, the way good monkfish should (it's garnished with black and green garlic and poured, for extra measure, with a rich lobster glaze), and if you want something slightly heftier, I suggest the country chicken (cooked roasted and deep fried, with snap peas and kale), or the plump pork sausage, which was so nicely composed on a white plate around a tasteful amount of potato salad that one of the sophisticates at my table took out her phone and snapped a picture of it.

Anthony and his team also provide the various snack dishes (cold carrot soup, pots of pickled cucumbers, a variety of open-sandwich toasts) at the very pleasant café on the eighth floor of the new Whitney, and on a peaceful weekend afternoon, with the sun beating down on the parasols outside and the Statue of Liberty shimmering in the distance, it's one of the better new lunch venues in town. You don't have to pay a \$22 nonmembers fee to get a seat at Untitled, however, which is also open late into the evening, and on Tuesdays, when the museum is closed. You won't find the excellent chocolate hot fudge cake on the café menu either (although the less-interesting, much-Instagrammed gluten-free "triple chocolate chunk" cookie is available upstairs), or the strawberry pound cake, which is so tasty and pleasant to look at (it's covered with a Riesling zabaglione and dappled with pistachios and tiny sorrel leaves) that you might be distracted, momentarily, from the shoals of summer tourists moving back and forth just outside the window.

SCRATCHPAD

One and a half stars for the tight, Haute Barnyard menu, and another half-star for the location and, yes, the room.

BITES

IDEAL MEAL: Lobster toast, leeks with citrus, black bass or roasted chicken, chocolate hot fudge cake or strawberry poundcake.

NOTE: There are eight varieties of sparkling rosé on the wine list and 22 Champagnes. **OPEN:** Monday through Sunday for lunch and dinner. **PRICES:** Appetizers, snacks, and vegetables, \$6 to \$15; entrées, \$23 to \$27.

Fricos are usually made from Montasio cheese. Meyer uses SarVecchio, a hard Parmesan-style variety produced in Wisconsin, which he grates and bakes until golden.

For his salsa macha, Meyer uses **peanuts** and a trio of seeds (**sesame, pumpkin, and sunflower**). There's garlic for punch and sherry vinegar for acid.

Oil is an essential component of the almost Sichuan-seeming salsa and carries the flavors of three chiles (**puya, pasilla, and ancho**) that have been toasted, puréed, and steeped.

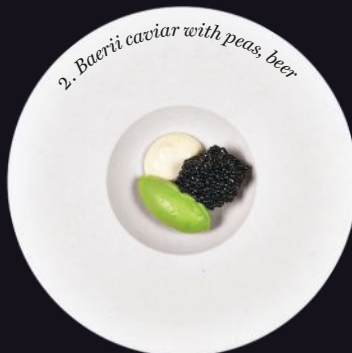


ATERA

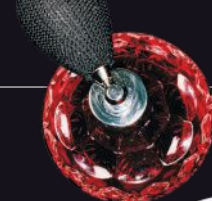
→
START



1. Green tomato with juniper



2. Baerii caviar with peas, beer



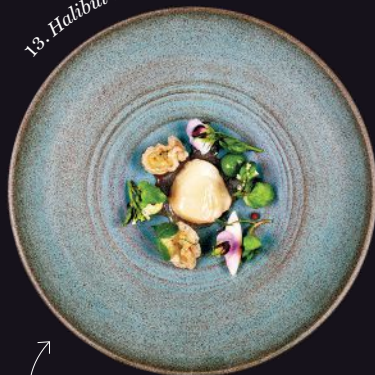
3. Rose with lobster, beet



8. Sepia with lardo, fish sauce



13. Halibut with cucumber



14. Asparagus with locage, whey



15. Foie gras with black currant, peanut



9. Oyster with ponzu



Atera

The much-praised Danish chef Ronny Emborg is less of an overt haute forager than his talented predecessor, Matthew Lightner, but the deft combination of elemental flavors (birch bark, juniper, a whiff of wood smoke), impeccable ingredients, and first-class technique makes this our favorite new big-money tasting in town. **Courses:** 19 (varies). **Cost:** \$235, service included. **Time:** Two hours, 31 minutes. **Highs:** Peanut-butter-and-jelly-like foie gras garnished with black-currant fruit leather; the impossibly delicate lamb saddle en croûte with a burnt-onion jus; the nonalcoholic “temperance”-cocktail pairing. **Lows:** The price, which doesn’t include the \$195 for drink pairings. 77 Worth St., nr. Church St.; 212-226-1444.

And the Others

YUJI RAMEN/ OKONOMI

Yuji Haraguchi composes his ramen tasting according to *mottainai* (utilizing every bit of every ingredient) at this elegant little Williamsburg establishment and serves it for one sitting only, on Saturday and Sunday evenings. You’ll feel like you’ve stumbled into a restaurant in an obscure Tokyo neighborhood. **Courses:** Eight.

Cost: \$100. **Time:** Two hours. **Highs:** The tilefish ochazuke flavored with leek and fennel; the chilled mazemen noodles folded with puréed soft-shell crab; the cool, green seaweed-spiked ramen agnolotti stuffed with monkfish-liver purée. **Lows:** The alcohol choices could be more elaborate, as could that age-old *omakase* Achilles’ heel, dessert. 150 Ainslie St., nr. Lorimer St., Williamsburg; no phone.

KO

This state-of-the-art reboot of David Chang’s seminal East Village *omakase* bar is more lavish and comfortable than the original, but also slightly more impersonal. There’s nothing wrong with the top-class, consistently innovative menu, however, which is orchestrated by one of Chang’s most talented and loyal lieutenants, Sean Gray. **Courses:** 14 (varies). **Cost:** \$175.

Time: Two hours, ten minutes. **Highs:** The mille-feuille pastry with trout roe and matcha tea; the soft scrambled eggs with Osetra caviar; any piece of fish you can get your hands on, and, if you have the cash, the excellent drinks pairings by the beverage director, Jordan Salcito. **Lows:** The antiseptic new digs at the bottom of a new condo off the Bowery. 8 Extra Pl., nr. E. 1st St.; no phone.



4. Waffle with Cheddar, mushroom



5. Crab with tomato, rose hip, parsley



6. Golden whitefish roe with green almond, sunchoke



7. Scallop with apple, horseradish



16. Lamb en croûte with onion



10. Whole wheat bread



11. Razor clam with bitter greens, miso



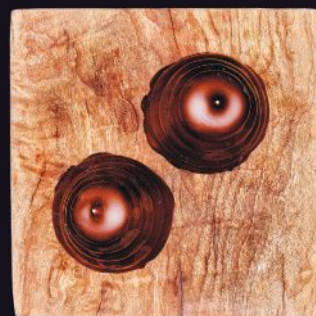
12. Sourdough croissant



17. Chamomile with meringue, vanilla, lemon



18. Pine with rhubarb, yogurt



19. Flødeboller

FINISH

EMPELLÓN COCINA

The hypertalented Alex Stupak throws everything but the proverbial kitchen sink into this Mexican-themed, four-seat “Kitchen Table” tasting marathon. Prepare to do a lot of eating with your fingers and to nod politely when the chef says, “We’re going to make a salsa out of grasshoppers now, if that’s okay.” **Courses:** 24 (it’s possible I lost

count). **Cost:** \$150. **Time:** Two hours, 30 minutes. **Highs:** Trout-belly-tartare flautas; quail eggs wrapped in tempura-fried chorizo; the inverse al pastor taco with grilled pineapple dripped with lardo; and, for dessert, the rhubarb tres leches cake. **Lows:** The sheer volume of the meal, which Stupak admits has caused some diners to “tap out.” 105 First Ave., nr. 6th St.; 212-780-0999.

SEMILLA

This pleasant tasting room is as cramped as a submarine, but the casually sophisticated nature of Per Se alum José Ramírez-Ruiz’s satisfying “vegetable forward” cooking makes it feel like you’ve dropped in at the chef’s home kitchen. If you’re weary of spending your own cash (instead of, say, the magazine’s), this is the place for you. **Courses:** Eight (varies). **Cost:** \$75.

Time: One hour, 40 minutes. **Highs:** The justly famous sourdough bread; the fried spring-onion pancake; the chopped salad with tuna and asparagus; pastry chef Pamela Yung’s rhubarb dessert, topped with Earl Grey ice cream; and the (relatively) low cost. **Lows:** I could have used another course, plus another hint of protein. 160 Havemeyer St., nr. S. 2nd St., Williamsburg; 718-782-3474.

ALDER

After the closing of his famous downtown atelier wd-50, it was only a matter of time before Wylie Dufresne began dabbling with the tasting format at this elevated East Village gastropub. Some of his experiments work better than others, but if you’re a devotee of the master’s madcap cooking, the \$65 sticker price is hard to beat. **Courses:** Five, plus the

amuse-bouche. **Cost:** \$65. **Time:** One hour, 39 minutes. **Highs:** The silver-dollar-size octopus okonomiyaki; the cinnamon-and-Ovaltine cake; the fact that you can also order items from the great à la carte pub menu. **Lows:** Some dishes sound more interesting than they taste, and the casual setting can detract from the sense of occasion. 157 Second Ave., nr. 10th St.; 212-539-1900.

THE KEEPER

39 PA

For WALLS, CANVASES, and TOENAILS. Including Alex Katz's trusty

INTS



orange, an interior designer's preferred pale pink, and a mime's ideal white.

PICKING OUT A paint color—for the living room, for a self-portrait, for your toes—can often involve hours of deliberation and the occasional hardware-store panic attack: Are the yellow undertones of that matte white too sickly? Will that gray oil paint come across too warm? Is that the right red nail polish for my skin tone? Just in time for summer renovation projects and Prospect Park watercoloring field trips, we gathered together the city's various experts on all things hyperpigmented and asked

them to pick out—and muse on—their favorite hues. The result: More than a dozen local interior designers go deep into their preferred whites and neutrals, calming greens, and Hermès-cashmere-sweater-reminiscent oranges; 15 well-known New York artists famous for their paint-obsessiveness reveal their most treasured cobalt pigment sticks and “baby skin”-colored spray paint; while Billy the Mime picks out the best acrylic white face paint for doing Thomas Jefferson and Jeffrey Dahmer impressions.

CATEGORY I
DÉCOR

Interior designers offer up that one color they can't interior-design without. BY JASON CHEN



1

ANTONINO BUZZETTA
on
BENJAMIN MOORE
Regal Select:
Slate Teal, Pearl

“Slate is the Goldilocks of teal: Most teals tend to be too green or too blue. It has this neutrality that works so nicely with blacks and grays, which is what I paired it with when I used it for an accent wall in a bedroom I just designed.” \$53 per gallon; H. Brickman & Sons, multiple locations.



2

JON CALL (MR. CALL DESIGNS)
on
C2
Luxe Interior: Summer Squash, Eggshell

“I love what it does to a sunny living room—light activates the pigments and brings a happy glow to the space. I’ll pair it with soft whites or camels; the combination feels soft and elegant, like a stack of cashmere sweaters at Hermès.” \$75 per gallon; Colours by Martin, 191 Ninth Ave.



3

SAM ALLEN
on
DONALD KAUFMAN
DKC-66, High Gloss

“This aubergine is very dramatic, especially when used with brass hardware in a study or bar. What helps it flatter a room are the green undertones—which is nature’s enhancer—rather than blue. Don’t use it in a kitchen or bathroom—too intense.” Price upon request; Colours by Martin.



4

ROMAN ALONSO (COMMUNE)
on
FINE PAINTS OF EUROPE
Signature Collection:
No. 9340, Eurolux Gloss

“This is an almost-ancient-looking red that the eye never really gets sick of. It’s great for wood-grain walls and doors—it’d be stunning to paint some wood dark green, cover it with Cottage Red, and wait for it to chip.” \$139 for 2.5 liters; Janovic Plaza, multiple locations.



5

PATRICK MELE
on
BENJAMIN MOORE
Aura Interior:
Yolk, Matte

“It’s almost cringe-inducing—in a good way. And an exclamation point where other yellows can be dull. I used it on a home where the hallways were covered in blue-and-white wallpaper, and gave the alcove some pop of Yolk.” \$70 per gallon; M. Schames & Son, 90 Delancey St.

➤ **The Right Hue**
Eve Ashcraft, owner of the eponymous color-consultation firm, on how to arrive at the best shade for the breakfast nook.



Actually live with that Summer Squash first. “If I could convince people of just one thing, it would be to buy a small sample of two or three paints and paint a segment of your wall—then live with them for a bit. The biggest mistake people make is buying paint for a whole room based on a paint chip. I can’t tell you how many people call me in tears saying that the pale yellow on the chip looks insane on the entire room.” **Consider the lightbulbs.** “Obviously, the more light there is in the room, the brighter your colors will look, but know also that if you’re going to be using the room a lot at night (a bedroom, say, or a study), you should understand and test how the walls will look in that context. Are you using fixtures that throw light in funny angles? Are you using fluorescent bulbs (which can be cooler and more commercial feeling) or incandescents?” **Forget color theory.** “People always ask about the supposed effect of colors (‘Is pink really calming?’), but no matter how scientifically we’ve come to deciding that one color does this or that, you’ll find someone else who doesn’t feel that way at all. Choose what makes you feel good.”

➤ **The Brushes to Use**



FOR THE AREA AROUND THE DOOR AND WINDOW FRAMES:
Three-Inch Purdy XL Blue Heron BT
\$16.50; thepaintstore.com
The angled bristles let you paint in straight lines against trim and moldings; the beavertail-style handle provides the most comfortable grip too. (As much precision as this brush gives you, don’t skip the tape.)



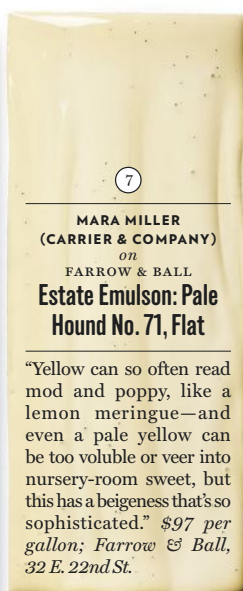
THIRTY-NINE PAINTS



6

GRAY DAVIS (MEYER DAVIS)
on
FINE PAINTS OF EUROPE
**Natural Color System:
S2020-G50Y,
Eurolux Gloss**

"This shade is visual peace, and it's not trendy. I used it in my upstate house—on every interior door and all the bathroom vanities—to create this lovely calming through line." \$139 for 2.5 liters; Colours by Martin.



7

**MARA MILLER
(CARRIER & COMPANY)**
on
FARROW & BALL
**Estate Emulsion: Pale
Hound No. 71, Flat**

"Yellow can so often read mod and poppy, like a lemon meringue—and even a pale yellow can be too voluble or veer into nursery-room sweet, but this has a beigeness that's so sophisticated." \$97 per gallon; Farrow & Ball, 32 E. 22nd St.



8

RYAN KORBAN
on
FINE PAINTS OF EUROPE
**British Standard:
Minerva Gray,
Eurolux Flat**

"Clients get nervous and think it'll be dark, but it isn't—this has the richness of a dark gray while still being neutral. I just used it in my living room; I left the moldings white, but the rest I did in Minerva." \$85 for 2.5 liters; Janovic Plaza.



9

SARA STORY
on
PRATT & LAMBERT
**Accolade Interior:
Flax, Matte**

"Flax has a really soft earth tone to it—just soft enough that, compared to blah beige-browns, it's still modern. I recently used it in the living room of a townhouse on the Upper West Side with a blackened steel mantel and quartzite stone." \$69 per gallon; Nuthouse Hardware, 202 E. 29th St.



10

KELLY WEARSTLER
on
PRATT & LAMBERT
**Accolade Interior:
Coy Pink, Eggshell**

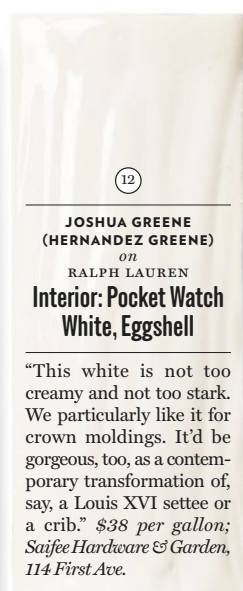
"Coy takes on distinct hues in different lighting, so the room changes throughout the day. And it's flattering next to every complexion. I love it for a powder room. Don't use it in a closet; clothing can reflect the paint and take on different hues." \$69 per gallon; Nuthouse Hardware.



11

WILL SAKS (HOME POLISH)
on
BENJAMIN MOORE
**Aura Interior: Decorators
White, Matte**

"Because of the gray undertones, it's a much more versatile white than creamier ones that can make people look sickly. I used it for an apartment that had great art—it's super-neutral, so I never worry about clashing colors." \$70 per gallon; Tribeca Paint, 217 W. Broadway.



12

**JOSHUA GREENE
(HERNANDEZ GREENE)**
on
RALPH LAUREN
**Interior: Pocket Watch
White, Eggshell**

"This white is not too creamy and not too stark. We particularly like it for crown moldings. It'd be gorgeous, too, as a contemporary transformation of, say, a Louis XVI settee or a crib." \$38 per gallon; Safef Hardware & Garden, 114 First Ave.



13

WILL COOPER (ASH NYC)
on
PURE & ORIGINAL
**Classico Chalk:
Silk White, Matte**

"I love that it's very powdery and really shows the strokes of the brush for that hand-applied finish. There's also more pigment used here in proportion to the solvents and additives, so it's a richer, deeper white that feels very refined." \$93 for 2.5 liters at nordshape.co.uk.



14

RYAN WHITE
on
PORTOLA PAINTS
**Acrylic:
Northern Lights, Flat**

"I'll use this in a hallway to give it a real sense of openness—it's a crisp white with a hint of gray, which helps to create a sense of mood rather than just clinical blankness, which can happen with a lot of whites. On furniture, too, it could add a note of depth." \$58 per gallon; portolapaints.com.



15

PALMER THOMPSON-MOSS
on
FARROW & BALL
**Estate Emulsion:
Shaded White, Matte**

"It looks totally different depending on the light. I prefer it in a bedroom or living room with lots of light because it really enhances shadow. I used it on a stairwell and ceiling by a skylight; it had this warmth and elegance that brighter whites don't have." \$97 per gallon; Farrow & Ball.

FOR WALLS AND CEILINGS:
Whizz Six-Inch Polyamide Rollers With Handle
\$7; thepaintstore.com
Leaves a textured semi-smoothness without foam residue that cheaper rollers can release, and the handles have covered ends that help reach corners.



FOR IRREGULAR SURFACES AND DETAILED FURNITURE WORK:
Proform Picasso Oval Angled Brush 1.5-Inch
\$7; thepaintstore.com
Made of an easy-to-clean filament-brush blend, this durable toucher-upper (the patented interior construction binds the metal ferrule to the wooden handle in a way that never loosens) enables the most meticulous fill-ins.

➔ Or Hire Someone to Use Them for You.

The pros on their go-to wall painters.



\$: Paintzen, paintzen.com; about \$.75 per square foot. "This company takes care of everything for you. They'll give you an estimate—they can even do it remotely based on dimensions and the scope—actually purchase the paint, and paint for you. Their painters will even do minor patching and prep before they start." —WILL SAKS
\$\$: Silva European Painters, 914-376-5546; about \$2.50 per square foot. "Jorge Silva is the easiest 'can do' guy I've ever worked with—I've been using him for ten years. Once he took a beaten-up cream exterior in Greenwich and had the whole thing—trim, windows, and all—painted a custom charcoal gray in under two weeks, just in time for my client's homecoming party." —PATRICK MELE
\$\$\$: R&S Painting Corp., 347-366-1238; about \$4 per square foot. "Sal Martinez does an exquisite paint job and also Venetian plasters and wallpapering. And honestly, for his quality and skill level, the pricing is actually quite reasonable. Last year he took on two projects for us at the same time—not only did he complete both on deadline, but he did it all beautifully." —MARA MILLER

THIRTY-NINE PAINTS

CATEGORY II

ART

Painters rhapsodize on the single color that's currently speaking to them. BY DAWN CHAN

16

NATALIE FRANK
on
TURNER DESIGN
**Gouache:
Permanent Lemon**

"Gouache, an opaque watercolor, simulates the heft and illusionistic possibility of oil paint. I started using the yellow a few years ago with chalk pastel for my drawings, layering one on top of the other." \$8 for 25 ml.; New York Central Art Supply, 62 Third Ave.

17

PETER SAUL
on
GOLDEN ARTIST COLORS
**Acrylic:
Indian Yellow Hue**

"It makes everything yellowish without changing the shapes in any other way. This reminds me of the movies and color photography, and every other glamorous thing there is." \$21 for 8 oz.; New York Central Art Supply.

18

ALEX KATZ
on
REMBRANDT
**Artists' Oil Paint:
Cadmium Orange**

"My early works were done with Bocour paints, and when they were discontinued, Rembrandt was suggested to me. I like its pitch and the consistency. Right now I'm using a lot of cadmium orange." \$25 for 40 ml.; Utrecht Art Supplies, 148 Lafayette St.

19

ANGEL OTERO
on
GUERRA
**Pigment: Cadmium
Red Light Xtra**

"Recently, I've been using this raw red pigment, adding it to photos, which I then press against the canvas to create my silicone transfer works and mono-type prints. This red is an especially vibrant one." \$98 for 16 oz.; Guerra Paint & Pigment, 510 E. 13th St.

20

MIKA TAJIMA
on
MONTANA GOLD
**Acrylic Spray Paint:
Baby Skin**

"Spray paint is resonant for me because it takes on both abstract and concrete forms. This color changes with what it's in relation to—it can be seen as fresh life or the luminescent fog of a chemical lab." \$8 for 400 ml.; jerrysartarama.com.

21

AMY SILLMAN
on
R&F
**Pigment Stick:
Cobalt Violet Deep**

"I can't live without these wax sticks: It's a relationship somewhere between drugs and baked goods. The cobalt-violet is a beautiful, fugitive, see-through violet, like a skein of silk." \$78 for 188 ml.; New York Central Art Supply.

22

MARILYN MINTER
on
ONE SHOT
**Lettering Enamels:
Proper Purple**

"Enamel paint's translucency and richness give my paintings their look. This is our most important color because it's so flexible: I'll tint it with yellow for a rich brown or add green to get it nice and muddy." \$14 for 4 oz.; Utrecht Art Supplies.

23

MATHEW CÉRLETTY
on
SENELLIER
**L'Aquarelle:
Dioxazine Purple**

"I started using watercolor as a counterpoint to my more technical oil paintings. I like purple because it's beautiful and slightly suggestive. It's funny how purple elicits passion from certain 'creative' personalities." \$11 for 10 ml.; New York Central Art Supply.

24

JOANNE GREENBAUM
on
LEFRANC & BOURGEOIS
**Flashe Vinyl Paint:
Cobalt-Blue Hue**

"I use Flashe for its matte surface and ability to absorb light. This blue is especially nice because the consistency of the color conveys simple blueness and has a particular generic feel I enjoy playing with." \$10 for 125 ml.; New York Central Art Supply.

25

SPENCER FINCH
on
WINSOR & NEWTON
**Professional Watercolor
Tubes: Cobalt Blue**

"I paint with this a lot, mostly for sky and water, and sometimes for painting my own eye. It is my best friend in the paintbox; it feels like a natural pigment, like it is from the world, not from a laboratory." \$10 for 5 ml.; Dick Blick Art Materials, 237 W. 23rd St.

26

CARROLL DUNHAM
on
GUERRA
**Pigment Dispersion:
Nickel Azo**

"This pigment is related to green and brown while being neither. It's actually a rather disgusting color, reminiscent of dirt or bodily functions. But it also has an industrial purity that makes it beautiful in its way." \$24 for 4 oz.; Guerra Paint & Pigment.

27

RASHID JOHNSON
on
RUST-OLEUM
**Metallic Specialty
Spray: Brass**

"When I was a kid, my mother bronzed my baby shoes. That golden-bronze color of the shoes has always stuck with me. For me, that bronze is a vehicle for cementing memory and nostalgia." \$11 for 11 oz. at amazon.com.

28

RICO GATSON
on
GOLDEN ARTIST COLORS
**Acrylic: Iridescent
Silver (Fine)**

"I started working with a four-color combination a few years ago—red, yellow, green, and orange—and decided to add iridescent silver, which gives a futuristic feeling to the equation." \$6 for 1 oz.; Utrecht Art Supplies.

29

KELTIE FERRIS
on
GUERRA
Graphite Pigment

"Graphite is such an elemental pigment; we all learned to write with pencils. I love the iridescence of the near black and the dark grays it produces. When mixed with linseed oil, it can appear dark black; from other views, it's a paler gray." \$6 for 2 oz.; Guerra Paint and Pigment.

30

DAVID SALLE
on
OLD HOLLAND
**Classic Oil:
Scheveningen
Warm Gray**

"I use this gray to make shadowed skin tones. It's warm and buttery, but not too warm. I like what the gray does next to a bright Naples yellow." \$14 for 40 ml.; SoHo Art Materials, 7 Wooster St.

Artist Mary Heilmann Paints Her ...



Detail of *Sunset*
(Whitney Museum of
American Art,
New York, May 1, 2015).

CANVASES: Pink

"For my new exhibit at the Whitney, I was thinking about these pink and black paintings I had done in the '70s and '80s; back then, that pink came from pop culture—*Pretty in Pink*, club lights. Now, I'm struck by the way the sunset turns the water pink. With this painting, I took two-thirds **Liquitex Fluorescent Pink** acrylic paint and added one-third **Liquitex Iridescent Medium**, with a little water thrown in to create a thin neon pink, so that the brushstrokes really showed. I painted it in a gestural way, almost like Asian calligraphy, and I kept sweeping it across the canvas. All of a sudden, it was just perfect—that moment is like coming to the top of the Himalayas, it's fabulous."

TOENAILS: Red

"Revlon's colors inspire mine. Way back when I was a kid in the '50s, there was a **Revlon** ad with a model showing her fingernails painted with **Fire and Ice**, which was this cadmium red that I loved. I used that red in my painting *Fire and Ice*, and we got some of the polish from Revlon too, so I painted my toenails that color—I love it."

KITCHEN: Mint Green

"When I moved in to my Bridgehampton house, there was some wainscoting on the kitchen walls in a very pale mint green. When they made those first tract houses in Levittown, which were a childhood influence of mine, they painted all the exteriors different colors, and that mint green was one of them. So when I painted the rest of the house, I left the mint green in the kitchen and in the bathroom too." AS TOLD TO MONICA KIM

Ellsworth Kelly Explains How He Finds That Perfect Yellow



Yellow With Black and White, 2013.

"In my recent show at Matthew Marks Gallery, there are five paintings that use the color yellow, and each one is slightly different. There are hundreds of yellows, but I'm looking for one that my eye says works for that particular painting. For me, the process of

making a painting is very private. I paint on stretched canvas that is prepared with gesso and then painted with oils. I get to a color by instinct; I mix color according to my eye. I never use exactly the same color because I don't mix scientifically; I use intuition, so it's impossible to make exactly the same color again."

THIRTY-NINE PAINTS

CATEGORY III

BODY

Nail pros and mermaids open up their makeup bags. BY KATHLEEN HOU

31

JULIET JESKE
(CHILDREN'S FACE PAINTER)
on
WOLFE FACE ART & FX
**Hydrocolor Essential:
Green**

"Other kids' face paints you can see through, but Wolfe's set is less opaque. And if the kids touch it, it won't smear. Boys always ask for Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles; I use this Kelly green as a base, then contour with a forest green." \$14; *Abacadabra*, 19 W. 21st St.

32

ANGELINA AYALLONE
(MAKEUP DESIGNER)
on
M.A.C
**Acrylic Paint:
Hi-Def Cyan**

"I used these paint pots on a film I did recently—they're blendable, and they won't sweat off. They're fun as body paint, too. The Cyan is a happy, retro blue, and you can mix it with white to create a Smurf or dark blue for an Avatar." \$20; *M.A.C Pro*, 7 W. 22nd St.

33

LINDEN WOLBERT
(PROFESSIONAL MERMAID)
on
MAYBELLINE
**Eye Studio Color Tattoo
Cream Gel Eye Shadow:
Painted Purple**

"It stays put on my lids, even in superhot weather, humid, tropical conditions, and most importantly, underwater. I tell kids, 'It's *spe-shell* mermaid makeup made with a touch of octopus ink!' That always gets a giggle." \$5; *target.com*

34

GEORGE KYRIAKOS
(STYLEBOOKINGS.COM
FOUNDER)
on
RITA HAZAN NEW YORK
**POP Color Temporary
Color Spray: Pink**

"I'll use this hair paint on a client who wants to experiment with a punk look for a party. It's a vibrant pink that covers really well. It works best on blondes; so brunettes might be better with the blue." \$18; *Rita Hazan Salon*, 720 Fifth Ave.

35

NADINE ABRAMCYK
(TENOVERTEEN OWNER)
on
NARS
Nail Polish: Schiap

"A perfect warm-weather pink. It has an electric tint, so it's not too girly—and the undertones are not too warm, not too cool. In the early days of Tenoverteen, I was constantly recommending it, so there's a mini-group of devotees that has developed and stayed loyal." \$20; *sephora.com*.

36

ELEANOR LANGSTON
(PAINTBOX OWNER)
on
SMITH & CULT
**Nail Polish:
Kundalini Hustle**

"This classic fire-engine red has blue undertones that make it work year-round, as opposed to more Bordeaux reds that are too deep for the warm weather. And I love how opaque the formula is—two coats give you a great saturated effect." \$18; *net-a-porter.com*.

37

LADY BUNNY (DRAG ARTIST)
on
OBSSIVE COMPULSIVE
**Lip Tar: Matte,
Beta-True Orange**

"I'll use this almost every time I drag up. You can buy regular orange lipstick, but the color is often muted. I'll sometimes add some yellow in the middle for extra zing. Plus, the brand is vegan and pleasantly scented with peppermint oil." \$11; *occmakeup.com*.

38

REBECCA PERKINS
(ROUGE NY FOUNDER)
on
TEMPTU
**Airbrush Airpod
System: Porcelain**

"When I did makeup for *Law & Order: SVU*, I used this foundation to turn actors into corpses. Porcelain has a bluer undertone to it. With corpses onscreen, you want to cast a blue-gray tinge to take away any living-looking warmth." \$50; *Temptu Pro*, 26 W. 17th St.

39

BILLY THE MIME
(PROFESSIONAL MIME)
on
MEHRON
**Face Paint:
Starblend Pancake**

"It's not so thick that it masks your face; I need to show the nuance of Jeffrey Dahmer's hunger or Thomas Jefferson's leer. I apply it with a wet sponge, and use a sock filled with baby powder to set it." \$10; *Alcone Uptown*, 322 W. 49th St.

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The CULTURE PAGES



The Rewriting of David Foster Wallace

How the author of *Infinite Jest* became the center of a self-help cult.

BY CHRISTIAN LORENTZEN

Jason Segel
as DFW in
The End of
the Tour.

PHOTOGRAPH: COURTESY OF A24 FILMS

NOBODY OWNS David Foster Wallace anymore. In the seven years since his suicide, he's slipped out of the hands of those who knew him, and those who read him in his lifetime, and into the cultural maelstrom, which has flattened him. He has become a character, an icon, and in some circles a saint. A writer who courted contradiction and paradox, who could come on as a curmudgeon and a scold, who emerged from an avant-garde tradition and never retreated into conventional realism, he has been reduced to a wisdom-dispensing sage on the one hand and shorthand for the Writer As Tortured Soul on the other.

For someone who has long loved Wallace's writing, as I have, one of the ironies of this shift is that, whether he intended to or not, Wallace started the process himself. First, he embarked on a series of publicity campaigns in which he performed his self-conscious disdain and fear of publicity campaigns, a martyr to the market culture and entertainment industry he was satirizing in his books. Then there was a treacly commencement speech at Kenyon College in 2005 that became a viral sensation and later, a few months after his death, a cute, one-sentence-per-page inspirational pamphlet, *This Is Water: Some Thoughts, Delivered on a Significant Occasion, About Living a Compassionate Life*. And now comes a bromantic biopic, *The End of the Tour*, starring Jason Segel as Wallace and Jesse Eisenberg as David Lipsky, the novelist *Rolling Stone* sent to write a (later abandoned) profile of Wallace in 1996. The movie's theme is the bullshit-ness of literary fame—which Wallace, the permanently unsatisfied overachiever, nonetheless craved (not to mention it might get him laid, which he also thought would be a phony achievement). The movie is based on *Although of Course You End Up Becoming Yourself*, the book of transcripts Lipsky published in 2010. And since much of its dialogue is transferred directly from the tapes, it does have a claim on the authentic Wallace.

None of this is entirely new; Wallace has always been an unstable commodity. For two decades, the writer and his writings have been at the center of a cult with several branches. The first branch is other fiction writers, who also tend to be the most serious readers. This makes a certain obvious sense. *Infinite Jest* is, on its face, the most daunting of novels; 1,079 pages, 96 of them endnotes; text in small type pointing you constantly to text in smaller type, necessitating multiple bookmarks; an immersion in two subcultures, junior tennis and addiction recovery; a time commitment to be measured in weeks, not days—two months for serious readers, Wallace thought. Writers took to it like Marines sprung from a sort of literary

boot camp, hunting for something beyond the minimalist vogue of the 1980s.

The second branch are the magazine writers for whom his essays renewed the possibilities of a fast-aging New Journalism by clearing away Tom Wolfe's cynicism and replacing it with a dazzling *faux-amateur* act.

The third are the academics; English professors hadn't received the gift of fictional worlds so rich and susceptible to their hermeneutics since Nabokov, Beckett, or Joyce.

But before his suicide he compared his own fame only to that of a high-profile classical musician. It's just since the Kenyon speech became the sort of chain email your dotty uncle forwards you that Wallace has been transformed into an idol of quasi-moral veneration, the bard of ironic self-loathing transformed into a beacon of earnest self-help. And now that he comes to the screen, bandanna and ad hoc spittoon in tow, he stands to become a hero to audiences who haven't read a word of his work. The cult could become a church.

THE WALLACE ESTATE (he is survived by his widow, the painter Karen Green, and his sister, Amy Wallace-Havens) has said it doesn't support the movie, didn't consent to it, doesn't even "consider it an homage." What would Wallace himself have said of the film, which follows him on his *Infinite*

Wallace has been reduced to a wisdom-dispensing sage on the one hand and shorthand for the Writer As Tortured Soul on the other.

Jest tour, a movie about his efforts in book promotion that also accelerates his canonization? "The whole going around and reading in bookstores thing," he told a German television interviewer in 2003, "it's turning writers into kind of penny-ante or cheap versions of celebrities. People aren't usually coming out to hear you read. They're coming out to sort of see what you look like, and see whether your voice matches the voice that's in their head when they read. None of it's important. It's icky." Icky not because he felt he couldn't play the game but because he found himself playing it so well. In 1996, he went on *Charlie Rose*, with friends and rivals Mark Leyner and Jonathan Franzen (long-haired and quite baby-faced back then), offering alternating monologues on the state of the American novel and the role of the novelist in a culture addicted to television. Wallace later wrote a letter to Don DeLillo saying the appearance had been a mistake. "I wanted to stay on my side of the screen," he said.

In a 2011 *New Yorker* essay, Franzen named Wallace's relationship to his own fame as the central battle of his adult life. He also gave voice to more than one "interpretation" of Wallace's death that most journalists have been careful to avoid and many others probably found unseemly, that Wallace "had died of boredom and in despair about his future novels"; that his suicide "took the person away from us," his loved ones, "and made him into a very public legend"; and that he had therefore, in hanging himself, "chosen the adulation of strangers over the love of the people closest to him." Franzen said it might well have been "suicide as career move"—the "Kurt Cobain route."

Although I can't deny Franzen's sense of the long game, I have a hard time reckoning "career advantage" as the motive in the deaths of Wallace, Cobain, Plath, Hemingway, or Van Gogh. But, then, your life rights go with you when you die. There have been at least 40 versions of Hemingway on film and television since his death, each a stand-in for our idea of the tortured artist as romantic adventurer. In *The End of the Tour*, Segel plays Wallace as he is now more and more remembered, a man solicitous of acclaim but made uncomfortable by attention, trying to figure out a way of living in a culture that has made him a hero but also seems designed to enhance his loneliness. Which is fitting, really, given that Wallace is now known to the public mostly as the author of that *This Is Water* commencement address.

A word on that speech and why I dislike it. Wallace begins with two parables: one about a pair of fish who are asked how the water is and don't even know what water

is (i.e., they don't appreciate the wonder of the world around them), and another about an atheist who believes that God didn't answer his prayers when he was lost in the blizzard and that he was instead saved by two Eskimo who happened to be passing by (i.e., he's too set in his beliefs to recognize the hand of God when it saves his life). Wallace apologizes at the start for delivering "banal platitudes," then asserts their "life or death" importance as he delivers a message about overcoming self-centeredness. It's all breathtakingly obvious, as Wallace keeps pointing out. And then he gets to an example of one of the adult challenges this virtuous thinking will help you overcome: an unpleasant after-work trip to the grocery store. "And who are all these people in my way? And look at how repulsive most of them are, and how stupid and cowl-like and dead-eyed and nonhuman they seem in the checkout line, or at how annoying and rude it is that people are talking loudly on cell phones in the middle of the line. And look at how deeply and personally unfair this is." The horror! Perhaps I'm an outlier, but I've mostly enjoyed my visits to grocery stores over the years. In any event, it strikes me that there are more difficult things about adulthood than navigating the express-check-out line, and more that it demands of us than overcoming self-centeredness and reflexive sourness. What Wallace describes as a universal rite of passage into maturity seems more to me like the daily struggles of a serious depressive, which he was. To me, it's the least interesting version of himself he ever put to the page. But an unquantifiable number of online readers, millions of YouTube viewers, and thousands of bookstore shoppers disagree. Among the more dispiriting aspects of the Wallace canonization is how much it has been built out of his suffering—the way the cult has revived, for precisely the post-therapy, post-Romantic, self-help-soaked culture Wallace described and intermittently deplored, the Romantic picture of the depressive as a kind of keen-eyed saint.

LITTLE WARS HAVE meanwhile been going on about Wallace's writing. He's dominated the discourse about the novel for two decades. A short and crude version of the story might go like this. *Infinite Jest* appeared in 1996 and was followed the next year by Don DeLillo's *Underworld* and Thomas Pynchon's *Mason & Dixon*. Here were three enormous books, two by acknowledged masters and the other by their brilliant apprentice. But whereas his elders were looking backward—DeLillo to

the Cold War and Pynchon to the 18th century—Wallace was looking ahead, to a time when the corporatization of North America had brought about an era of Subsidized Time, such that the calendar now measured out the Year of the Tucks Medicated Pad, the Year of the Trial-Size Dove Bar, and so forth.

It was a politically desperate vision—one of pervasive personal atomization and cynicism. If you listen to Wallace's post-*Infinite Jest* radio and television interviews, he's constantly emphasizing that he was trying to write a book about loneliness and sadness and that many of his reviewers were missing that and pointing instead to his obvious comic talent and the book's dauntingly fractured majesty (James Wood famously described its style as "hysterical realism").

As it turned out, it was the book's melancholy that trickled down, detached from the structural excesses. Look at the stories collected in *Granta's* "Best of Young American Novelists 2" issue of 2007, and what you see is a garden of sad tomatoes.

"Is it possible that sadness can make people graceful?" the narrator of Nicole Krauss's contribution, "My Painter," asks. Many young writers thought the answer was "yes," which is something Wallace himself had predicted in his 1993 essay "E Unibus Pluram," in which he foresaw a new sincerity as the most viable direction for the generations of "anti-rebel" fiction writers raised on television's corrosive irony. We have new problems now, and even the valence of the term "hysterical realism" has shifted, such that critic Adam Kirsch recently applied it to Joshua Cohen's novel *Book of Numbers* as a compliment. Cohen had redeemed the style, he said, by fusing it to another: autofiction, in which the line between the author and the narrator is unstable, as in the books by Sheila Heti and Ben Lerner.

Of course, Wallace, too, wrote autofiction, but it was called journalism. A common reflex among readers is to divide Wallace's fiction from his nonfiction—to treat them almost (Continued on page 120)



David Foster Wallace in New York.

Amy Schumer Is Going to Be a Very Different Kind of Movie Star

The comedienne makes the leap.

BY LINDSAY ZOLADZ



"I'M NOT GONNA be a very good movie star," Amy Schumer said in front of a sold-out hometown crowd at the Beacon Theatre in mid-June—who were there to see her stand-up tour, and who seemed to disagree strongly with that statement. I don't remember exactly when she uttered it, but I want to say it was after the bit about the dieting tips she'd learned in Los Angeles ("That's the Hollywood secret: Don't put any food in your dumb mouth!"); or the one about exactly how LeBron James ended up with a supporting role in her upcoming movie *Trainwreck* ("I wrote him into the script because he's the only basketball player I'd ever heard of"); or maybe it was after her rant against *Zookeeper*, a 2011 film starring Kevin James, which doubled as a critique of the rules about casting love interests in Hollywood. She summarized the plot for those who hadn't seen it: "Kevin James is dating a beautiful blonde skeleton" and is too preoccupied with the talking animals around him to see that he has earned the affections of a girl-next-door type played by Rosario Dawson. Schumer made one of those beady-eyed, sour-milk faces she's now famous for. "Rosario should get an Oscar for that movie," she declared. "Let's see Meryl pretend to want to fuck Kevin James for six months."

This is precisely why Amy Schumer is going to be such a singular movie star: Even as she stands poised to enter Hollywood's comedy elite (*Trainwreck*, directed by Judd Apatow, is out July 17, and she'll open for Madonna in New York in September), she remains unafraid of naming names. Or anything, it seems. Watching her over the past few months—stealing shine at awards shows, giving insta-viral acceptance speeches, delivering a triumphant third season of her Comedy Central show, *Inside Amy Schumer*—has been exhilarating. She's like a comet streaking gloriously across the Zeitgeist, leaving a tail of smudged mascara and Fireball aftertaste in her wake. In the words of her *Trainwreck* co-star Tilda Swinton, "She's an honesty bomb. And she's coming for you."

Schumer is hitting her stride at the same time that everyone is starting to pay attention to her—a period that also happens to be a strange and transitional one for comedy. Former heroes have fallen (*Cosby*); others are butting heads with the next generation (*Seinfeld*'s recent "so p.c." rants). Schumer feels like the perfect heroine for an era when we've begun to reject that age-old assumption that women aren't funny, but she seems acutely aware of the pressures of this position, too: She knows that the second we make her stand for something larger than herself, we are asking for too much. At the Beacon, she recounted a story of doing an interview with a women's magazine. "Do you think it's a game-changer that you're going to be on the cover of magazines now?" the interviewer had asked. For herself? Of course, Schumer said. "No, for, like, everyone." She frowned; the crowd groaned knowingly.

Trainwreck may end up being Schumer's make-or-break movie moment, but one of the most refreshing things about it is that its success or failure is not a referendum on "female comedy." For as great as it ended up being, *Bridesmaids* arrived with an almost civic sense of duty; see it for the cause. *Trainwreck* is poised to do well in this changing climate, but even if it doesn't, you get the sense that cultural momentum is moving in its direction.

Outside the Beacon, the glowing, chattering crowd filed out a little after 11. Two young men behind me discussed what a treat it was to be out this late on a Monday. "Yeah, you have a family now," one said to the other teasingly. "Ha, no, I don't," he replied with exaggerated gusto. "She can suck my dick, that dumb blonde bitch."

I turned around and smiled, which is what I do when I'm scanning someone's face for inclusion into my mental database of assholes. "Ha, I was joking," he said to me. I shrugged and said nothing, feeling confident in this new world into which, thanks to women like Schumer, we're barreling at high speed. Now, at last, it takes just a smidge more work and thought for a man to be able to call something a "joke." ■



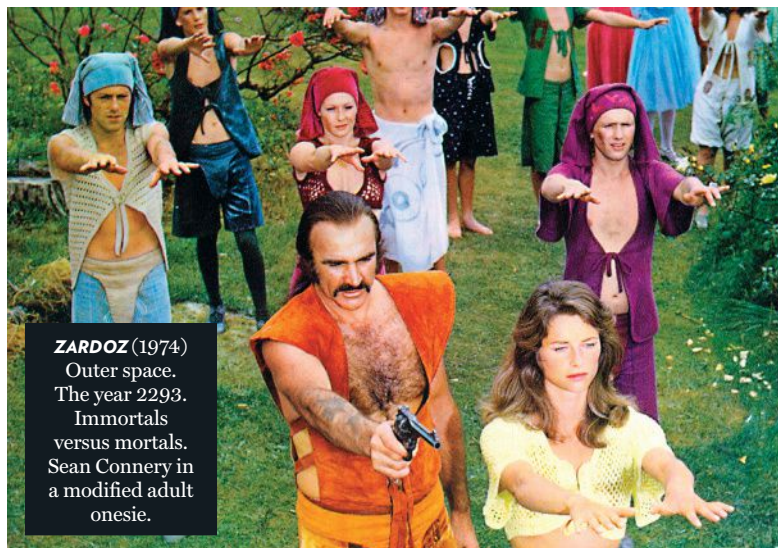
THE STONER CANON



POT HAS EVOLVED from rebellious drug to increasingly legal *aperitivo*, but popular notions about what constitutes the best of stoner culture are too often stuck in a bleary-eyed rehash of the Pink Floyds and *Fritz the Cats* of the world. So let's expand our minds. With a view that acknowledges both the classics as well as the recent outpouring of weed-centric entertainment (and looks deeper than Cheech & Chong—those movies do *not* hold up), here are the definitive cultural keys to unlocking the zonked headspace.

A

A Brief History of Seven Killings, by Marlon James (2014) A shapeshifting outlaw novel about smoke-enraptured Kingston, Jamaica, that crescendoes with an assassination attempt on a singer who is never called Bob. ● **African Herbsman**, by Bob Marley and the Wailers (1973) Speaking of Bob, here he is at his most mellow and tuneful, produced by reggae mad professor Lee Perry, whose dub experiments are a whole other trip. ● **Akira** (1988) The ne plus ultra of anime film epics. ● **The Ancient Secret of the Flower of Life, Vol. 1**, by Drunvalo Melchizedek (1990) Modern seeker Jaden Smith vouches for this, the sacred nonfiction book of our new New Age. ● **Antiques Roadshow** (1997–) Who are these people and where do they get such oddball doodads



ZARDOZ (1974)
Outer space.
The year 2293.
Immortals
versus mortals.
Sean Connery in
a modified adult
onesie.

are inexhaustible questions. ● **Avatar** (2009) In 3-D, if you can swing it.

B

The Big Lebowski (1998) “Hell, I can get you a toe by three o’clock this afternoon.” ● **The Book of**

Genesis, by Robert Crumb (2009) The key cartoonist of the high ‘60s tackles the Bible’s heaviest book. ● **Breakfast of Champions**, by Kurt Vonnegut Jr. (1973) A counterculture novel of free will and line drawings of anuses.

C

The Clock, by Christian Marclay (2011) This 24-hour art installation, consisting of clips showing the time in other films, transforms your experience of whatever it is that time is made of. Or something to that effect. ● **Confusion**, by Fela Ransome-Kuti and the Africa 70 (1974) Afrobeat splattered with synthesizer blurrings.

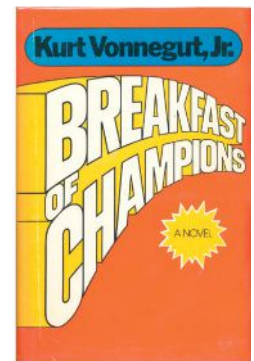
D

The Dark Eidolon, by Clark Ashton Smith (1935) A contemporary of H.P. Lovecraft whose fictional

phantasmagorias went over the edge of the abyss. ● **Dopesmoker**, by Sleep (2003) Perfectly slow and immensely heavy heavy metal. “Onward caravan / Prepare new bong.” 10-4!

E

Electric Ladyland, by the Jimi Hendrix Experience (1968) The only psychotropically accurate album of the first psychedelic era. ● **Enter the Void** (2009) The shining zenith of French director Gaspar Noé’s ongoing sensory-overload project.



G

G-Funk Classics, Vols. 1 & 2, by Nate Dogg (1998) West Coast rap from the ‘90s was fueled by smoke, and Nate was both its best hookman and chilliest operator.

I

In a Silent Way, by Miles Davis (1969) Modern jazz as spooky ambient drift. ● **Inherent Vice**, by Thomas Pynchon (2009) Fiction’s tenth-degree-black-belt paranoiac writes his own *Lebowski*, with ellipses that ... model stoned thinking ... and are funny?

J

Jodorowsky’s Dune (2013) In this doc by Frank Pavich, the director behind stoner-cinema classic *El Topo* attempts, and fails, to adapt *Dune* in visionary and bombastic fashion.

L

Lonerism, by Tame Impala (2012) ‘60s psychedelia rendered with 21st-century production values, turning small epiphanies into massive sonic journeys.

M

Maggot Brain, by Funkadelic (1971) Hard rock’s funkier and most celestial guitar explosions. ● **The Matrix** (1999) Baudrillard and kung fu go together like Doritos and peanut butter. (Very well.) ● **McCartney**, by Paul McCartney (1970) No John, George, or Ringo around to force Paul to finish his brilliant half-thoughts. ● **Merriweather Post Pavilion**, by Animal Collective (2009) Dance and dub recording tricks rolled into Beach Boys-shaped pop songs.



MARINA ABRAMOVIC AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART (2010) One other human being as the ultimate mindbender.

BROAD CITY

(2014–)

Remember that episode where Abbi morphed into an old-timey singer named Val? And remember that other episode where there was a random crazy lady on the subway waving and calling out, “Val! Val!” If you think about it, maybe that crazy lady actually wasn’t so random at all. There are a lot of moments like that.



N

New Amerykah, Pt. 2: The Return of the Ankh, by Erykah Badu (2010)

Snaky Afro-futurist neo-soul. Key lyric: “If anybody speak to Scotty, tell him beam me up.”

P

Pilgrim at Tinker Creek, by Annie Dillard (1974)

Nature writing by an author who knows what it is to really look at cats and moths. ● *Promethea* (1999–2005) Comics wizard Alan Moore’s sort of profound mishmash of superhero mythology and bringing about the end of the world.

R

Riddley Walker, by Russell Hoban (1980)

An idiosyncratically spelled postapocalyptic novel that makes more

BLADE

RUNNER

(1982)

“Retire” this replicant. Just don’t start to wonder if you’re one.



sense the longer you stare at its sentences-as-riddles.

S

Sacred Mirrors, by Alex

Grey (1979–89) Are these paintings good art?

Not really. But Grey’s X-ray humanoids look like psychedelia feels.

● Sandinista!, by the Clash

(1980) 36 songs of punk, rap, pot, dub, pot, funk,

folk, rock, and pot.

● Selected Ambient Works, Vol. 2, by Aphex Twin

(1994) Machine music, perfectly calibrated for cyberwombs. ● *Silver*

Surfer (1966–) The Sentinel of the Spaceways achieves

mystical gravitas in writer Dan Slott and artist Michael Allred’s current

run. ● *Smiley Face* (2007) Anna Faris stumbles into the stoner-movie dudefest.

● *Star Trek* (1966–69) Scotty here. Prepare for beam-up, Ms. Badu. ● *Step*

Brothers (2008) Will Ferrell and John C. Reilly in the most gleeful cinematic

comedic nonsense ever.

T

Teletubbies (1997–2001) Primo zoning out material. Toddlers like it too. ● *Tim*

and Eric Awesome Show, Great Job! (2007–10) Our Monty Python. ● *Ryan*

Trecartin (2005–) The artist conjures actual objects and digital imagery as seen through dragonfly

eyes. ● *The Tree of Life* (2011) Mostly for the part when director and stoner

god Terrence Malick shows us a dinosaur learning mercy. ● *Twin*

Peaks (1990–91) Lynch, natch. ● *Two-Lane*

Blacktop (1971) Dennis Wilson and James Taylor on a drag race to nowhere

in Monte Hellman’s existential highway movie. ● *2001: A Space Odyssey*

(1968) The monolith, apes, and HAL would be enough, but then Kubrick

throws in that visual freakout toward the end on the off chance that the rest wasn’t sufficiently jaw-slackening.

U

Ultraviolence, by Lana Del

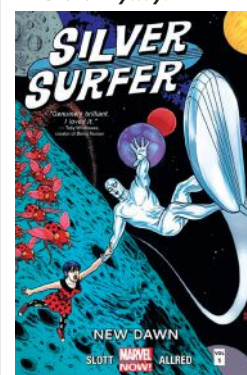
Rey (2014) Glamorously hazy and languorous pop-noir to pass out to.

W

Waking Life (2001)

Philosophical dorm-room palaver, rotoscoped, in Richard Linklater’s trippiest film. ● *Whose*

Line Is It Anyway?



(1988–98) The British TV version, in which the cleverest comedians think of the funniest things at the fastest speeds.

● *Winged Migration* (2001) Birds are amazing.

X

The X-Files (1993–2002)

For the monster-of-the-week episodes more than the overall mythos, which frankly gets a little weird.

BANGERZ, BY MILEY CYRUS (2013)

The glittering human GIF, surrounded by Mike WILL Made-It’s throbbing, snapping production.



ADVENTURE TIME

(2010–) Hand-drawn and humble animated riffs on Dungeons & Dragons-style adventures. The Ur-modern stoner cartoon.



MUSIC

"It's Not Just a Work of Genius"

The minimalist composer La Monte Young, immodestly and correctly, on his life and influence.

BY ROB TANNENBAUM

LA MONTE YOUNG has a different relationship to time from the rest of us. His music goes on for a long time—that's objectively true, and it feels even longer if, like many people, you find it boring. He's credited as the vastly influential father of minimalism because when he was 22, in 1958, he wrote the first piece that held notes for a long period, suspended in air to allow examination and contemplation. His best-known work, *The Well-Tuned Piano*, is a solo performance that has grown in length from three and a half hours to five to, last time he played it, nearly six and a half. (It would have been longer, but he rushed a few parts.) When he was young, Young shocked Karlheinz Stockhausen by strolling in two hours late for the intimidating composer's morning composition class in Darmstadt, Germany. For some time, Young lived on a weekly cycle of five 33.6-hour days. Lately, he stays awake for 24 hours, and then rests for 24.

In a white-carpeted West 22nd Street gallery, the Dia Art Foundation is hosting the *Dream House*, a music and light installation co-created by Young and his wife, Marian Zazeela. They had five weeks to install it, Young says as he sits in Dia's vast space, and it will remain there for only four months. *Why so short a time?* he wonders. *What's the hurry?*

Dia acquired the *Dream House* for a price in "the high six figures," a source says, which is a lot of money for a piece that's notional and can't readily be resold. Foundation staffers were frustrated when Young refused to pose for photos and declined nearly all interview requests. He knows the lack of publicity could hurt

ticket sales for his series of performances, which continue through October. But he doesn't care. "I'm too famous," he tells me.

Young isn't interested in temporal popularity; he believes his music will be exalted, because it leads toward enlightenment. "People have written that I'm the most influential composer in the last 50 years, and I think that's true," he says. "What's more, when I die, people will say, 'He was the most important composer since the beginning of music.' It's not just a work of genius—I did things no one ever dreamed of and I set up an approach to sound that parallels universal structure."

"La Monte isn't known for his modesty," chuckles Rhys Chatham, who studied

with Young and is best known for writing minimalist guitar assaults. He recalls La Monte saying, "If one invents fire, why should one be modest about it?"

Yet none of his major compositions are in print, he rarely performs, and he places such extensive restrictions on performances of his music that it's rarely heard. He has all but disappeared, by his own hand. "He's basically unknown at this point," says David Harrington, leader of the Kronos Quartet, which commissioned a piece from Young in 1990. "Even young musicians we mentor don't know about La Monte. It's tragic."

Young's boasts come off as more charming than annoying. Partly that's because he's a tiny 79-year-old who talks like an MIT professor, with a command of math, physics, history, and mysticism, but looks like an elfin Hell's Angel. Tonight, he's in his customary uniform: dark jeans, a sleeveless denim jacket, no shirt, and a scarf over his head. He's hung metal links from his hearing aids. He would look badass-evil if he weren't mischievous and merry.

Also, Young's boasts are true. He has, as he claims, "influenced thousands of musicians." He inspired Terry Riley, who inspired Steve Reich and Philip Glass. He tutored Chatham, a bridge to influencing Glenn Branca and Sonic Youth. John Cale and Angus MacLise played with him in the '60s, then co-founded the Velvet Underground, which makes Young a source for nearly every alternative-rock band. His experiments with extreme volume and repetition point right at My Bloody Valentine. And Brian Eno, who called Young "the daddy of us all," spun Young's long tones into ambient music.

He is the most important living American composer, as he claims. And he'll remain so even if no one interviews him and no one comes to hear his music. And while Young has made music that defies and distorts time, time hasn't reciprocated. Young will be 80 in October and he's increasingly infirm. "When you get to be 80, you start thinking, *How am I going to go for another year?*" he admits. La Monte Young is running out of time.

HE'S WORKED IN New York for 55 years, but Young traces the origins of his music to sounds he heard as a child in Bern, Idaho, especially the high whistle of a hard plains wind running through his family's log cabin and the sustained buzz generated by electric poles and generators. His father, Dennis, a devout Mormon, worked as a shepherd to pay the \$5 monthly rent on the cabin, and was a "brutal" man who beat La Monte and "had no money because he had too many kids and (Continued on page 117)

PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN CLUETT/© PANDIT PRAN NATH 1987/COURTESY OF THE PANDIT PRAN NATH MUSICAL COMPOSITION TRUST. COLORIZATION: GLUEKIT.



PARTY LINES

Edited by Jennifer Vineyard

SEASON-THREE PREMIERE OF *ORANGE IS THE NEW BLACK*
SKYLIGHT CLARKSON SQ. JUNE 11.

"I have a tattoo of Lori Petty from *Tank Girl*. I said to everyone, 'Please don't tell her. I'd like to meet her and be cool first,' and then everybody told her. She walks up and she's like, 'Are you the girl with my face on your back?'" —Ruby Rose



What's your exit strategy for leaving parties early?

"We have it down to a look now, I think."



Naomi Scott

"I never want to stay past, like, minute three."



Adam Scott

"We give a host or hostess gift. We cruise around once or twice."



"What is right above the rude threshold? And then it's like, *Ready to go home and watch Game of Thrones? Let's go!*"



NEW YORK PREMIERE OF *THE OVERNIGHT*
HOSTED BY JUUL
LANDMARK SUNSHINE CINEMA AND THE DL. JUNE 18.

TANGENT

"You know what? I have three children of completely different ages, and so juggling all of that—school runs, sports, an exam this day, Spanish is tomorrow, you've got a biology exam Friday. Wait, hang on, you've got to go to the osteopath, and what did the baby have for supper? That's chaos."

—Kate Winslet

GARDEN OF DREAMS FOUNDATION
ANNUAL CHILDREN'S TALENT SHOW
RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL. JUNE 18.

"My mother said, 'Hank, I need to ask something serious. Marge and Homer on *The Simpsons*, are they breaking up?' I was like, 'Mom, it'll be all right.'" —Hank Azaria



NEW YORK PREMIERE OF *A LITTLE CHAOS*
HOSTED BY THE PEGGY SIEGAL COMPANY
MUSEUM OF MODERN ART AND MONKEY BAR. JUNE 17.

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The CULTURE PAGES

CRITICS

Matt Zoller Seitz on *Catastrophe* ...
David Edelstein on *Tangerine* and *Amy* ... Justin Davidson on *Conlon Nancarrow*.




Catastrophe

TV / MATT ZOLLER SEITZ

Advanced Speed-Dating

A couple gets procreation out of the way early on Amazon's rom-com *Catastrophe*.

 THE ROMANTIC COMEDY of the year is a half-hour sitcom that debuted in England in January and is now streaming on Amazon Prime: *Catastrophe*. You'll smile whenever you say the title; the show's first season, a brisk six episodes, leaves you no other option, because it's so damn likable. Created by and starring Sharon Horgan (*Pulling*) and comedian Rob Delaney, it's about an American businessman named Rob (of course) and an Irish schoolteacher named Sharon (why not?) who conceive a baby during a weeklong affair in London, then decide to stay together and raise it. The series has all the basic elements you want from a romantic comedy: yearning, heat, kindness, selfishness, impulsive stupidity, grand gestures, sharp dialogue, and an endless series of obstacles for the lovers to navigate—some occurring naturally, others placed there by their own ignorance, stubbornness, or inability to see what's in front of them. But

CATASTROPHE
AMAZON PRIME.

Catastrophe isn't content to ace the basics, as rare as that may be in an age of pathetically diminished rom-com expectations. It takes a key page from the playbooks of some of the great dramas of recent years and lets us look at a familiar situation through fresh eyes, by lifting it out of its usual context and depositing it in weird new terrain. The domestic situations of *The Sopranos*, *Breaking Bad*, *The Americans*, *Mad Men*, and other dark dramas would have seemed quite familiar were it not for the alien context (gangsters, drug dealers, spies, an impostor hero), and, as strange as this might sound, Horgan and Delaney pull off a similar miracle here, by making their main characters a couple who enact the rituals and milestones of a lifelong relationship even though they've just met.

You've seen the story of a couple of intelligent, attractive people trying to keep their chemistry going over the long haul at least 10 gazillion times. But you haven't seen such characters getting together as quickly

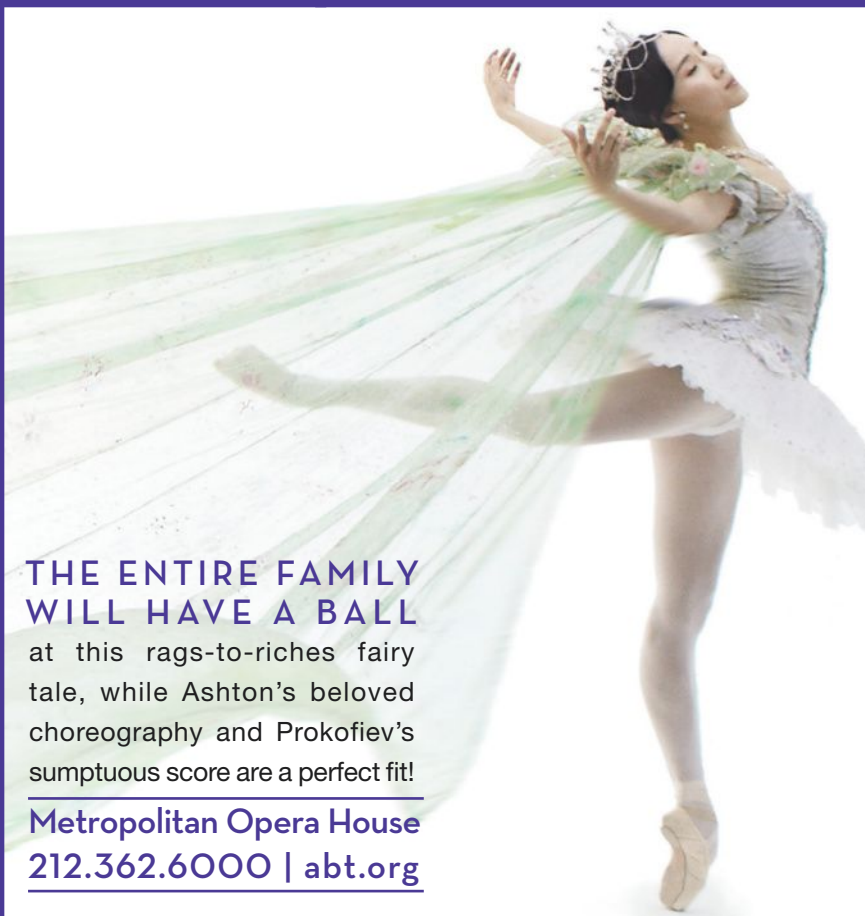
as Rob and Sharon, and making so many momentous decisions so instinctively, and then coping with all the complications and surprises that pop up. Their wild week (actually six days) is covered in the first few minutes of the pilot, a whirl of banter and belly laughs and flailing legs. They don't talk like funny sitcom characters; they talk like real people who happen to be funny, and who enjoy making each other laugh, and treat the challenge as another part of the courtship ritual. The revelation of Sharon's pregnancy, a bomb-drop moment that most series would delay until the final scene of the pilot, happens almost exactly five minutes into the premiere, when Rob takes a phone call from Sharon during a maybe-date with a much younger woman and returns to their table looking as if somebody has smacked him in the gut with a folded stroller. Nine minutes in, Rob is back in London, sitting by Sharon's bedside in a hospital while a nurse does an ultrasound, and then there's a revelation that turns their already upside-down lives sideways—the first of many. There are usually several twists in an episode, some fairly minor, others so immense that they'd be hard for the characters to process even if they'd been together for years instead of ... well, how long is it? Weeks? It's all a blur. The score, by Oli Julian, is a series of musical wind sprints, with banjos and yodeling that evoke the opening ten minutes of *Raising Arizona*, a montage that packed so much information into ten minutes that it felt like a recap of a nonexistent prequel.

Through it all, *Catastrophe* serves up all the expected tropes of the romantic comedy (and life, really), including scenes that introduce valued but deeply irritating best friends and loving but resentful relatives (including Carrie Fisher as Rob's mother, who has as many notes of exasperation as a piano has keys), and scenes where one or the other becomes distracted or bored and starts going out on dates that they insist aren't dates, and moments where the mostly cheerful energy dissipates and Sharon and Rob become short-tempered and surly with each other. There are revelations about the characters' pasts that cause more friction; a couple of them are disturbing and have to be seriously dealt with before *Catastrophe* can resume charming you. And as all of this is exploding across your little computer screen like a series of cherry bombs, you periodically have to remind yourself that these two self-selected life mates don't really know each other—not as life mates are supposed to, in fiction or in life. Sometimes you forget this until one of them reminds the other, as Rob does when he chastises Sharon for not wanting him to unpack his clothes in her apartment: "You let me put my penis in your

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mouth, but you won't let me put my T-shirts in your drawer?" "Please don't rush me, Rob," Sharon says.

After a while, the phrase "These two don't know each other" sinks into the imagination and pours a concrete foundation and builds itself a house and hangs a hand-lettered sign on the front door that reads METAPHOR. Nobody really knows anyone. Nobody really knows him- or herself. Not that well. We keep discovering our significant others, and rediscovering them, and coming to terms with them, and making hard decisions about whether we can handle more unpleasant surprises or make more concessions for the sake of domestic peace. Every other couple on the series is harboring secret fears and longings—and just plain secrets—that would appall their partner if exposed. Given all this, is it necessarily more sensible to take things slow? (Rob questions this notion in a monologue

about the low divorce rates of couples in arranged marriages.) And is couple-hood really innately superior to flying solo, as pretty much every romantic comedy would have us believe? Every few minutes some other character is giving Sharon or Rob advice that means nada, because they aren't Sharon or Rob, and because their own lives aren't nearly as orderly, predictable, and safe as they seem to think. Authority figures (doctors, bosses, parents) keep sharing life lessons that have a "one size fits all" vibe; but what if one size doesn't fit all, and what if all these authority figures are stupid or deluded? ("You know, they told my brother when he was 10 that he had polio, but it turns out he was just clumsy," Rob tells Sharon.) Nobody knows anything. So what can you do? The "catastrophe" of *Catastrophe* isn't the pregnancy or any other discrete event. It's life itself. You race along and don't look back and try to like the banjo music. ■

taining, old-fashioned, mainstream Hollywood comedy should be but no longer is. That nowadays you have to get this kind of stuff via Sundance from directors using iPhones is a drag—the wrong kind.

Consider the two leading ladies, who are beautiful in conventional ways, apart from their penises. Kitana Kiki Rodriguez is Sin-Dee, who has just emerged from jail after 28 days and learns while sharing a doughnut with her best friend and fellow sex worker, Alexandra (Mya Taylor), that her boyfriend-pimp, Chester, has been sleeping with a "white fish" (i.e., a biological woman, and Caucasian). This sends Sin-Dee on a tear down the sidewalk with Alexandra and the iPhone cameraman in pursuit—Sin-Dee with her tangerine skin, streaming blonde hair, and skinny ass, Alexandra with her black hair and more sumptuous cushion. Alexandra makes Sin-Dee promise there'll be no "drama," but the "Dee" in Sin-Dee clearly stands for "drama." So when Sin-Dee's *faux*-genial attempts to ascertain her boyfriend's whereabouts turn into ear-splitting fits, Alexandra peels off to hustle up customers and hand out cards advertising a show she'll be performing that night.

The scenario created by Baker and his co-writer, Chris Bergoch, sounds like it's from the Pedro Almodóvar playbook, but the style isn't camp, high or low. This is a post-camp transgender comedy, both hilarious and heart-attack serious. You might howl as Sin-Dee storms into a decrepit motel room full of prostitutes and cowering johns and drags Chester's little blonde thing, Dina (Mickey O'Hagan), out by her bleached hair—but you also worry she'll draw blood. When people live this close to the edge, in identities they've fashioned for themselves, every moment seems like a fight to exist.

Much of *Tangerine* is bathed in—what else?—orange, the low, slanted winter sun suggesting a perpetual 5 p.m. while the characters race to find what they're after before darkness (and Christmas). Baker's L.A. is baked without being warm, empty-feeling and indifferent, a place for transacting business. The third major character is a seemingly cool customer, a cabdriver named Razmik (Karren Karagulian) who listens impassively to a menagerie of passengers (one lonely old babler is played by 86-year-old Clu Gulager), his role in the action inexplicable until he begins to circle the neighborhood where Alexandra, Sin-Dee, and their fellow workers drift. Wedged in his apartment alongside his traditional family—wife, child, overbearing mother-in-law—Razmik goes into the back streets to find another kind of woman. He can express his true feelings (and Alexandra can pick up needed cash) in the front seat



Tangerine

MOVIES / DAVID EDELSTEIN

Hollywood Blues

A transgender prostitute battles her pimp in *Tangerine*.



SEAN BAKER'S Sundance crowd-pleaser *Tangerine* is a boisterous three-pronged farce that follows two transgender hookers and an Armenian male cabdriver through the seedier sections of Hollywood on Christmas Eve. Much of the attention for the movie has centered on its preposterously low shooting budget and camera, an iPhone 5s with a \$7.99 high-def app, a Steadicam rig, and the odd anamorphic lens. The focus on indie ultrapoverty is a bit misleading, though, since the postproduction spit and polish and slick soundtrack lift *Tangerine* far out of the shoestring class, and it isn't adventurous narratively, either. What's extraordinary about *Tangerine* is that it's everything an enter-

of his cab as it passes through a carwash—proving all you need is an iPhone; a few bucks for suds, spray, and a wipe-down; and a crack editor to create one of the most riotously suggestive (off-camera) sex scenes in the annals of cinema.

Tangerine builds to a rather stogy farce climax in a store with the name Donut Time. But by then this cooker has built up so much pressure that merely seeing these people (plus the mother-in-law, the “fish,” and Chester) in one place has you gasping. Rodriguez has a gift for physical comedy—fast, fierce, brazenly confident—but also the ability to let the mask drop to reveal a grim, pensive face. Taylor is her perfect counterpart—centered, with a capacious soul. Mouthy and washed out, O’Hagan lets you glimpse the emptiness of Dina’s life. James Ransone’s Chester is a lying sack of opportunism with an unexpectedly romantic heart.

To one degree or another, these are characters with stature—it’s their culture that’s stunted. They deserve a place at the table the way movies like this deserve a place at the multiplex.

THE AMY WINEHOUSE documentary *Amy* is alternately thrilling and devastating, throwing you back and forth until the devastation takes over and you spend the last hour watching the most supernaturally gifted vocalist of her generation chase and find oblivion. Directed by Asif Kapadia, who had amazing access to Winehouse’s family and friends, *Amy* raises a question that’s common to downward-spiral docs: Is it a profile or an autopsy?

I’d go with the latter, having learned more in two-plus hours about Winehouse’s death than about the wellsprings of her art—meaning its jazz, soul, hip-hop, and girl-group roots. But the movie does feature a lot of jaw-dropping footage of Winehouse recording and performing, the important (and not always intelligible) lyrics superimposed in elegant cursive. Perhaps some kinds of genius are better off left mysterious, while the circumstances of a death at age 27 are easier to recount.

Kapadia doesn’t exactly point fingers—it’s more of a subtle nod in the direction of, say, Winehouse’s father, Mitch, who acknowledges an affair of many years during Amy’s childhood, laments his lack of courage in not leaving home until she was 8, and adds, “I felt that Amy was over it pretty quickly.” The evidence says Amy was never over it, thereafter carrying twin longings: to be entirely guided by a strong male figure and to defy that figure

TANGERINE
DIRECTED BY SEAN
BAKER. MAGNOLIA
PICTURES. R.

AMY
DIRECTED BY
ASIF KAPADIA.
A24 FILMS. R.

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by hurting herself. Alcohol and bulimia are what ultimately ravaged her, but she also followed her strikingly self-centered lover (later husband) Blake Fielder-Civil into the world of crack cocaine and heroin out of a need to feel exactly what he was feeling. Winehouse understood all this—it's in the self-immolating lyrics of "Rehab" and "Back to Black," among other songs, and in her frank interviews—but self-knowledge didn't help.

Amy is a celebrity-mongering documentary about the lethal effects of celebrity. Her

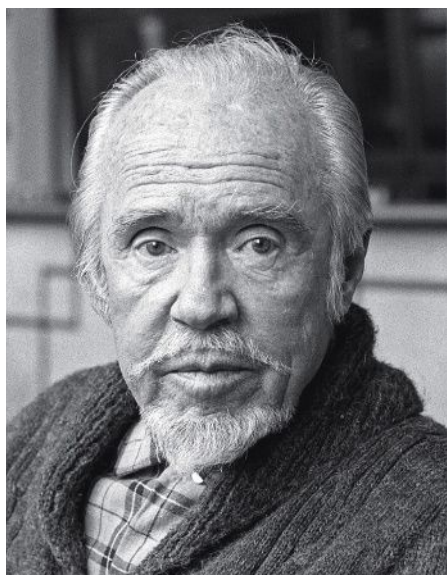
management's decision (abetted by her dad) to push her into a tour that began and ended in humiliation was the coup de grâce. But the main culprit might have been fame itself. She had such a fragile talent, every note profoundly felt and hard-won, and Kapadia shows her repeatedly surrounded by paparazzi, whose clicks he amplifies to the point where they sound like the guns that took down Butch and Sundance. We identify with her pain but see her through the eyes of those cameras, complicit in spite of ourselves. ■

brated in the United States. The Whitney tribute began and ended with Nancarrow's medium of choice: a player piano of the kind that once plunked out tunes in parlors and bars. The show's co-curators, Dominic Murcott and Jay Sanders, loaded a perforated roll onto the spindle and flipped a switch, unspooling a process straight out of a mad-scientist movie. The engine hummed, the belt turned, pistons churned, and the keys toggled faster than human fingers could press them, sending notes skittering off the strings like oil from a hot pan. Music exploded out of the nearly 100-year-old little upright, sounding at once familiar and strange: wild, jittery blues; off-kilter counterpoint; bent canons; steely chords trailing puffs and trills. This is how this music should be experienced, the mind primed by looking at Jackson Pollock and Jacob Lawrence and Louise Bourgeois, ready to absorb Nancarrow's staggering originality.

In Mexico City, where much of life takes place behind high stuccoed walls, Nancarrow retreated ever further into himself. He built a house, then a separate studio where he could tinker with music machines: an apparatus that cut records, tape players, a device that he hoped would operate his orchestra of drums. After realizing that performers would balk at the complexity of his rhythms, he spent years huddled over a worktable in his thick cardigan, laboriously marking off units of time on piano rolls and punching holes by hand.

Nancarrow purified his language to sometimes off-putting extremes. He hardened the hammers on his instrument with strips of metal, producing a tinny timbre somewhere between a harpsichord, an early synth, and a barroom piano. His music can be loud or (occasionally) soft but hardly ever lingers on shades in between. Tempos vary according to rational processes, mechanically executed: There's no such thing as stretching a beat or taking a breath just because a performer feels like it. Even his late-life, limited fame had a sort of fairy-tale purity. A trickle of acolytes came to meet him. In 1977, the producer Charles Amirkhania recorded his player-piano music for the small devotees' label 1750 Arch. When the eminent Hungarian composer György Ligeti got ahold of the LPs, he proclaimed the studies "the best music of any composer living today." In 1982, Nancarrow received a MacArthur Foundation grant. He was 70.

It's hard to write about his music without making him sound like a slide-rule mechanic who cared more for ratios than for expression. He used proportions too arcane to register consciously and sometimes too close to be perceived at all. *Study No. 33* is a canon in which the two voices sound at different speeds in a ratio of $\sqrt{2}$ to 2. No. 41



Conlon
Nancarrow

CLASSICAL MUSIC / JUSTIN DAVIDSON

The Superhuman Instrument

Conlon Nancarrow got player pianos to make gorgeous sounds that no mere person could produce.

TO ANYONE WHO MET Conlon Nancarrow in the 1930s—or '40s, or '50s—he must have seemed like a bit of a lost sheep. A thinly educated trumpeter whose father was the mayor of Texarkana, Arkansas, he drifted from school to school, city to city, enthusiasm to enthusiasm. He tried his hand at composing, conducting, marriage, and communism, none of which worked out very well. In 1936, he signed on with a shipboard band bound for Europe and eventually made his way to Spain to join the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. He returned skinny, swashbuckling, and handsome, with a musketeer's facial hair and shrapnel in his neck. Since he bore the brand of communism, he moved to Mexico City, kept writing music, and lived on a modest stream of family money.

Nancarrow was an old man before the world realized that he had spent decades in his studio producing a set of musical marvels. In his last years he collected belated tributes, and his death in 1997 yielded glowing obituaries. The Whitney Museum has just concluded an 11-day event, "Anywhere in Time: A Conlon Nancarrow Festival," that partly made up for the fact that his centennial, in 2012, went largely uncele-

ANYWHERE IN TIME:
A CONLON
NANCARROW
FESTIVAL
WHITNEY MUSEUM
OF AMERICAN ART.
JUNE 17 THROUGH 28.

spins off into mathematical absurdity: Just try tapping $\frac{1}{3(\sqrt{\pi})} / 3\sqrt[3]{\frac{13}{16}}$ notes in one hand while you bang out $\frac{1}{(\sqrt{\pi})} / \sqrt[3]{\frac{2}{5}}$ in the other—or detecting an error if the player piano gets it wrong. What you have zero trouble perceiving, though, is the all-over cascade that opens the piece, followed by a tentative boogie-woogie, which quickly starts shedding pieces of itself like a spacecraft reentering orbit. Each piece operates like a miniature vehicle: You don't need a Ph.D. to savor the thrill of the open road, but you sure are glad that the engineers who designed the gas pedal knew what they were doing.

That's especially true with his canons, written in an antique form that he subverted with brilliantly idiosyncratic logic. To get a crude idea of how he worked, gather some friends and do this at home: One person starts singing "Frère Jacques," the next comes in slightly slower, the third person slower still, and so on. See how many seconds you can last until the whole thing falls apart in a clangorous mess. That's why Nancarrow avoided live performers. The player piano allowed him to pin each voice to its own unvarying pace, or to speed up or slow down by deliberate degrees, without getting pulled off course by the others. In *Study No. 21*, one voice accelerates while the other decelerates, so that they cross at the midpoint of the piece. It's a simple game, really, that produces results of dazzling complexity, an apparatus of wheels whirring at changing speeds.

Nancarrow's career coincided with a mid-century love of mechanically derived beauty. Steve Reich grew entranced by listening to two tape recorders playing the same loop but falling gradually out of sync. Sol LeWitt attained the sublime by writing out instructions for drawing pencil lines on a wall. Mies van der Rohe fetishized the purity of straight lines and unbroken planes. But Nancarrow, with supernovas of notes and exotic forms of friction, was no Minimalist. For all his method, his music can sound engagingly mad.

In embracing the musical machine, Nancarrow may have thought he was walking away from human performers, but actually he was throwing down the gauntlet. Musicians have responded, learning to execute his crazy cross-rhythms with accuracy and aplomb. (At least in this way, the world has measurably improved over the last century: Even ordinary virtuosos today can do things that would have made their teachers cry.) At the Whitney, a roster of experts and groups, including Alarm Will Sound, played some of his studies deconstructed for mixed ensemble. But the fitting center of the festival was an inanimate object cranking out some of the most weirdly human music that an American composer ever wrote. ■



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Top: Noh Mask in a Silk Case (detail); Japan; 17th century; wood, lacquer; 5 1/4 x 5 1/4 in. Brooklyn Museum. Gift of Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt in memory of Kermit Roosevelt, 44.192.1. Right: Still from Storm Over Tibet

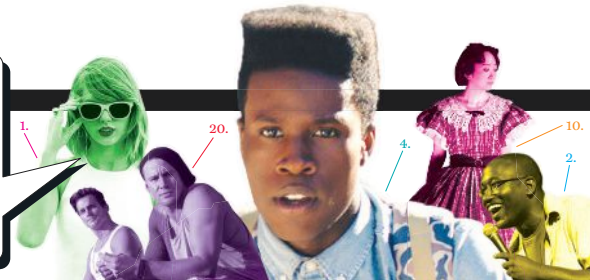


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The CULTURE PAGES

To

DO

TWENTY-FIVE THINGS TO SEE, HEAR, WATCH, AND READ.

JULY 1-15

John Kander and the team of Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty. **JESSE GREEN**

BOOKS

7. Read Jess Row's *Your Face in Mine*

Eerily timely.

Riverhead Books.

There's a special shelf for novels that see into the future, and Row's seriocomic satire about a Baltimore man who undergoes (and then markets) "racial reassignment surgery" might have just earned its place there. What seemed a little outlandish last August looks like straight social commentary in a Dolezal world—sharp, witty, and full of insights.

BORIS KACHKA

DANCE

8. See *Un Break à Mozart*

A century-crossing collaboration.

SummerStage, Central Park, July 2.

There's something inspired about pairing the rhythmic virtuosity of break dance with that of Mozart; here, the breakers of French company Accorap will try their moves out against the shimmering canvas of Mozart's Requiem, performed in a strings-only arrangement by members of the Champs-Élysées Orchestra.

REBECCA MILZOFF

POP

1. See Taylor Swift

On a very, very big stage.

MetLife Stadium, July 10 and 11.

Until now, you've pretty much known what you were going to get out of a Taylor Swift show: twangy acoustic-guitar anthems, humbly confessional asides, possible shriek-induced hearing damage. But Swift's 1989 world tour is her big coming-out party as a grown-ass pop star; it'll be fascinating to watch the transition.

LINDSAY ZOLADZ

TV

2. Watch Why? With Hannibal Buress

Because he's hilarious.

Comedy Central, July 8 at 10:30 p.m.

Buress's laid-back provocateur attitude and pleasingly off-kilter observations rarely feel scripted, even when he's been obsessing over a subject. Comedy Central, where he recently appeared as a very chill dentist on the great *Broad City*, has now given him his own weekly show, combining stand-up, man-on-the-street segments, interviews, and filmed sketches.

MATT ZOLLER SEITZ

CLASSICAL MUSIC/MOVIES

3. Hear Danny Elfman

A career in scores.

Avery Fisher Hall, July 6 through 12.

From the spacey chorales of *Edward Scissorhands* to the dark massed brasses of *Batman*, Elfman has intensified the bright colors and surreal atmospherics of Tim Burton's movies for three decades. At the Lincoln Center Festival, the soundtracks bust out of the screen and onto the concert stage.

JUSTIN DAVIDSON

MOVIES

4. Watch *Dope*

A hit of originality.

In theaters.

Rick Famuyiwa's punk-hip-hop coming-of-age thriller wears its referentiality on its sleeve: It's about a trio of pop-culture-obsessed nerds from the L.A. projects who wind up with someone else's drugs and have to figure out how to sell them. That plot may sound familiar, but the sheer inventive energy of the filmmaking wins you over.

BILGE EBIRI

ART

5. See George Caleb Bingham

Bask in mid-19th-century placidity.

Metropolitan Museum of Art, through September 20. In 16 dreamy scenes of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, Bingham paints peace, geometry, and Manifest Destiny dreams of young America; paintings that take us to a time that never quite was and can certainly never be but that helped American artists break away from traditional European academicism.

JERRY SALTZ

THEATER

6. Watch The Legacy Project

Mentors and mentees.

iTunes.

Insightful pairings—Adam Guettel interviewing Stephen Sondheim; Will Eno interviewing Edward Albee—make the Dramatists Guild Fund's series of conversations with American theater writers fresh and relatively fawn-less. The six available online also feature the likes of

THE 60-SECOND BOOK EXCERPT: 'LOCAL GIRLS'

In Caroline Zamcan's debut novel (Riverhead Books), a group of Floridians' lives turn lively when a movie star drops into their local dive.



There was always a day, usually during the second or third week of the month, when the heat broke. It was an unofficial holiday in the state. On the morning of the night we met Sam Decker no one would have braved the sand too hot to stand on without flip-flops, or the lukewarm water that offered no relief from the invisible palm the air held over your nose and mouth. But it dropped five degrees between noon and three, and we followed the temperature like it was the Super Bowl score in the fourth quarter. By the time we hit the outskirts of Orlando that night, it felt like something had been released, like someone had changed the radio from a somber symphony to a rock song, and change of any sort felt promising to us back then, because we were young, and lived almost a full hour from even Orlando.

POP

9. Hear Super Furry Animals

At the 4Knots Music Festival.

Pier 84 in Hudson River Park, July 11, 9 p.m., \$25.

Even though they're at least as good, this Welsh psych-rock quintet never got the same respect that their '90s Britpop brethren Blur, Pulp, and Oasis did—so enjoy the extra elbow room at the band's first headlining New York gig in six years.

THEATER

10. See 10 Out of 12

The rehearsal's the thing.

Soho Rep, through July 18.

Anne Washburn's odd and often hilarious new comedy takes on the perverse challenge of making exciting theater out of the duller part of theatrical life: the soul-crushing purgatory of tech rehearsals. With the help of a great cast and

design team under Les Waters's superb direction, she astonishingly succeeds. J.G.

TV

11. Watch Shark Week

Have your chum and eat it, too.

Discovery, July 5 through 12.

Ah, Shark Week: that time of year when Discovery unveils a slate of programming that plays out our ancient fear of the ocean's silent, deadly predators while assuring us that they're misunderstood and endangered. Among this year's features: a documentary on the Gulf of Mexico's mako sharks, and *Bride of Jaws*, about the search for the largest-ever female great white. M.Z.S.

POP

12. Listen to Nate Ruess

Blast it to the rafters.

Atlantic Records.

Think of the front man of theatrical pop-rockers fun. as the Freddie Mercury of postcollegiate millennial angst. His first solo album, *Grand Romantic*, is full of the billowing hooks and feats of yelpy vocal daring we've come to expect from him—albeit with a newfound *AM Gold* warmth. L.Z.

ART

13. See Sarah Charlesworth

Looking back at a fork in the road.

New Museum, through September 20.

The late Sarah Charlesworth had just graduated from Barnard when she saw some conceptual art that made her so nauseated that she stopped painting; this first major local survey shows what happened when she turned to photography.

POP/MOVIES

14. Watch The Grateful Dead

The end of the golden road.

Brooklyn Bowl, July 3 through 5.

This week, the Grateful Dead's four surviving original members, joined by kindred spirits like Phish's Trey Anastasio, perform their last five shows ever. They're sold out, but the Bowery Presents will live-simulcast the final three on wide cinema screens with concert-quality sound.

BOOKS

15. Read Judy Blume's In the Unlikely Event

One for the grown-ups.

Knopf.

The author's first novel for adults in 17 years draws on a communal tragedy you could easily imagine in the hands of Philip Roth: In the early '50s, when Blume was 14, three planes crashed within two months in her hometown. But Blume's semi-autographical treatment isn't Rothian at all, focusing on personal transformations and adult struggles. It's a satisfying portrait of a time when many things really were taboo. B.K.

ART

16. See De Wain Valentine

Works from the West Coast.

David Zwirner, through August 7.

Nobody makes polyester resin look so damn

good—sexy, even—as Valentine. His minimalist sculptures transcend ordinary synthetic material to become transparent geometric forms that reflect and distort the surrounding light and space.

MOVIES

17. See The Third Man

First-rate digital restoration.

Film Forum.

The Third Man began when director Carol Reed asked Graham Greene to write a film set in a bombed-out, postwar city that showed pervasive cynicism and murderous, parasitical capitalism. The seedy, hurdy-gurdy Vienna melodrama that emerged featured Orson Welles as American predator Harry Lime, and his entrance is classic: A cat scurries over his shoe, light hits his face, and he looks abashed, like a naughty boy who's too delighted with his own cleverness to mind being caught. DAVID EDELSTEIN

MOVIES/POP

18. Watch What Happened, Miss Simone?

She's got life.

On Netflix streaming.

Liz Garbus's searing documentary beats the controversy-laden Nina Simone biopic to release and turns out to be a kind of corrective to the Hollywood-ification of this uncompromising artist. Through incisive family interviews and riveting performance footage, Garbus reminds us that, in a country still with entrenched racial inequity, Simone's message is as prescient as ever. L.Z.

POP

19. See Swirlies

Still rocking and hitting the road.

Baby's All Right, July 5.

When the shoegaze craze reached its peak, every band seemed to hail from the U.K.; the Swirlies were one of the few outfits that honed the sound Stateside. Twenty-five years later, their masterfully loud, bendy guitars still rock live.

MOVIES

20. See Magic Mike XXL

Chan and the boys are back.

In theaters July 1.

Unseen at this writing apart from the witty trailer, this male-stripper sequel appears to transform Steven Soderbergh's entertaining parable of how capitalism turns sex into a soulless commodity into a *Pitch Perfect*-like "Let's put on a show" competition comedy (with lots of tanned, toned torsos). What can one say except "Hubba hubba"? D.E.

BOOKS

21. Read Ashley's War

Special-ops reporting.

Harper.

Theoretically, American women do not serve in combat. In real life, Cultural Support Teams—squad of tough-as-iron female soldiers—are fighting alongside the men. Gayle Tzemach Lemmon, a national-security journalist and Council on Foreign Relations fellow, reports the story of pioneering CST member Ashley White and her squad's successes and personal tragedy.

THEATER/POP

22. Listen to PigPen Theatre Co.

Song, offstage.

Pigpen theatre.com, July 7.

PigPen Theatre Co. (its *The Old Man and the Old Moon* got raves here in 2012) plays live music in its shows but also exists as a stand-alone, real band. The company's sophomore album, *Whole Sun*, is a great blend: melodious folk rock with dramatic propulsion. J.G.



The Performance

Jesse Green on Mary-Louise Parker in *Heisenberg*.

With a title like *Heisenberg*, and a plot that begins with a smooch between an old man and a much younger woman, Simon Stephens's terrific new play might seem to be a cross between Nick Payne's *Constellations* and Craig Lucas's *Prelude to a Kiss*. Like the former, it applies a principle of physics to relationships; like the latter, it imagines the ripple effects of an encounter that's never fully explained. Also like the latter, it stars Mary-Louise Parker, who (after a few misfires) is once again beyond terrific in a role that suits her perfectly. Georgie, a New Jersey transplant in London, is an obnoxious oversharer with boundary problems. When she meets Alex (Denis Arndt), a 75-year-old Irishman, she very quickly moves from mistaking him for her late husband to denying the existence of that husband to calling Alex a "patronizing fucker" in a way that makes it sound nice. Despite her constant hilarious misconnections and hairpin contradictions, she's no caricature; Parker quickly sketches, and over the course of the play's 80 minutes depicts so fully it hurts, the ocean of sadness on which Georgie madly paddles.

At Manhattan Theatre Club's Stage II at City Center, through July 18.

TV

23. Watch Bridget Everett

Letting it all hang out.

Comedy Central, July 11 at 12:30 a.m.

Everett recently laid her soul (and plenty more) bare in her hilarious Joe's Pub show *Rock Bottom*; she'll continue the magnetic oversharing in this special, appropriately titled *Gynecological Wonder*.

DANCE

24. See Gibney Dance Company

In the great outdoors.

Brooklyn Bridge Park, Pier 1, July 11.

Amy Miller's latest work considers the place of the individual within the community. What better place to contemplate that than among the Brooklyn throngs, waterside? R.M.

BOOKS

25. Go to ThrillerFest X

With great expectations.

Grand Hyatt, July 7 through 11.

Meet (and learn from) Nelson DeMille, author of the best-selling *Radiant Angel*; Charlaiane Harris, author of *True Blood*'s literary inspiration; and the forensic specialist behind *Bones*, Kathy Reichs, who will all be honored at the tenth annual grokfest of thriller writing and publishing.

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Spotlight on Summer

Long summer days offer countless ways to get out and play. Take in a show, take a weekend trip, enjoy great food and cocktails—from day to night, the options are endless this season.



Photo by Matthew Murphy

Feel the Joy

KINKY BOOTS

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THERE'S NO BETTER time to see Broadway's big, fab, fun show. Experience the uplifting power of **Kinky Boots**, the Tony Award®-winning Best Musical now in its third smash year on Broadway. Inspired by true events, *Kinky Boots* is the story of Charlie

Price, a young man who inherits his father's shoe factory. Looking to save the family business, Charlie turns to a fabulously fashionable new friend, cabaret star Lola, who gives him an outrageous idea that could change both of their destinies. Soon, this unlikely duo creates the most sensational footwear that's ever rocked the runways of Milan—giving the factory and its hardworking family a sparkling new future.

This high-heeled, sequined sensation

features music by Tony- and Grammy®-winning pop icon Cyndi Lauper, a book by Tony-winning theater legend Harvey Fierstein, and direction and choreography by Tony winner Jerry Mitchell. With a life-affirming message about finding friendship, inspiration, and passion where you least expect, *Kinky Boots* proves that you change the world when you change your mind. Winner of six Tony Awards, this dazzling and joyous show is perfect for the whole family, and not to be missed.

Make Every Night Saturday Night

SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE: THE EXHIBITION

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SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE (SNL) is the longest-running comedy program in U.S. history. We all have our favorite casts, our favorite eras, and our favorite breakout stars. To celebrate its 40th anniversary, the iconic show that has defined and shaped pop culture since its debut on October 11, 1975, is finally receiving its first-ever full-scale exhibition a dozen blocks from the legendary Studio 8H location from which all episodes have been broadcast.

Walk through full-scale sets like the Celebrity Jeopardy game, the Church Lady set, and the show's Home Base main stage. See some of the greatest wardrobe items in television history including Dan Aykroyd's Coneheads costume and Goat Boy. Have a look at behind-the-scenes notes, scripts, cue cards, and video clips, and snap some selfies at the Weekend Update desk and the couch in Wayne and Garth's basement!

Start your trip in a mock of Lorne Michaels's office and journey through a week in the life of the legendary program with notes, props, videos, photos, and tons more from SNL stars, including Billy Crystal, Jimmy Fallon, Tina Fey, Eddie Murphy, Bill Murray, Chris Rock, Adam Sandler, Harry Shearer, and Ben Stiller. It's a long-overdue celebration of 40 years of the comedy and cultural juggernaut.



Go Wild This Summer

NEW YORK CITY CENTER

131 W. 55th St.

212-581-1212 | nycitycenter.org

TRAVEL BACK TO the decadence of the Jazz Age in *The Wild Party*, starring two-time Tony Award® winner Sutton Foster. Inspired by a wandering narrative poem of the same name written by Joseph Moncure March in 1928, Andrew Lippa wrote the original book, music, and lyrics for the show, which made its Off-Broadway premiere back in 2000.

The show is now reimagined for the Encores! Off-Center Season at **New York City Center**, playing July 15 to July 18. Lippa says, "We want to make it the best *Wild Party* ever." And, wild it is. It follows a 1920s party girl named Queenie over the course of one tragic, booze-soaked evening as she hosts a party to end all parties for a crowd of debauched vaudevillians, hookers, and one handsome stranger who offers her hope of a less tawdry life.

Alongside Foster, the fantastic cast, which includes Steven Pasquale from *The Bridges of Madison County* and Miriam Shor of *Younger*, bring the characters to such searing life you can almost smell the bathtub gin on their breath.





Laugh Yourself Rotten

SOMETHING ROTTEN!

St. James Theatre | 246 W. 44th St. | rottenbroadway.com

SOMETHING ROTTEN! is Broadway's smash-hit musical comedy drawing cheers from audiences and critics alike. Director and choreographer Casey Nicholaw seems to be the man with the Midas touch when it comes to Broadway musicals. The director of *Aladdin* and *The Drowsy Chaperone* and co-director of *The Book of Mormon* teamed up with Kevin McCollum, producer of *Avenue*

Q and *In the Heights*, to deliver this irresistible ode to musicals that *Variety* calls "ingenious, outrageous, and irresistible."

Set in the '90s—the 1590s, that is—*Something Rotten!* is the story of Nick and Nigel Bottom, two brothers who are desperate to write a hit play but are stuck in the shadow of that Renaissance rock star known as "The Bard." Christian Borle is brilliant

in the role of Shakespeare, for which he won the 2015 Tony Award® for Best Performance by an Actor in a Featured Role in a Musical. When the local soothsayer foretells that the future of theater involves singing, dancing, and acting all together at once, Nick and Nigel set out to write the world's very first musical!

Broadway lovers will thoroughly enjoy the riotous send-up of the musical theater genre, starring Brian d'Arcy James as Nick Bottom. Everything you love about musical comedy is on grand display in *Something Rotten!* With pitch-perfect comedic timing and



merriment and mirth, *Something Rotten!* is “Broadway’s funniest musical comedy in at least 400 years!” says *Time Out New York*. Nicholaw keeps the songs and sounds coming and the plot moving along at a good clip.

It’s pure musical comedy fun, filled with surprising laugh-out-loud moments. The show is chock-full of outsize characters and boisterous song and dance numbers. See the “irreverent valentine to Broadway” (*Associated Press*) this summer. It’s sure to keep you laughing long after you’ve left the theater.

Enjoy a Taste of Greece at Avra

AVRA ESTIATORIO

141 E. 48th St. | 212-759-8550
avrapy.com

THE BUCOLIC FISHING villages and wildflower-dotted hills of Greece might be thousands of miles away from Manhattan, but on a quiet side street in Midtown, **Avra Estiatorio** channels this peaceful island vibe and seaside splendor. It's reminiscent of a chic Mediterranean villa with its limestone accents, crisp white tablecloths, and exposed wood beams. The open interiors provide a refreshing escape from the urban hustle and bustle, complete with catch-of-the-day specialties delivered straight from the sea.



Photo by Dante Crisafulli

Sourced from the finest seafood purveyors and exclusive importers, the regional fare highlights Greek staples, such as barbouria, lithrini, and fagri. Start a meal with a selection of ultra-authentic appetizers, such as grilled octopus, savory fried saganaki cheese, and giant king prawns. Toast your health like a Greek with fantastic wine from the extensive list of international and Hellenic bottles, and linger over a multiple-course meal served with full Aegean flavor.

On weekends, get into a Mykonos mindset with a stylishly laid-back brunch from 11am to 4pm and live jazz on Sundays from noon until 4pm.



Photo by Sebastien Scanduzzi; (l to r) Quinn Franzen, Alia Attallah, and Karan Oberoi in Yussef El Guindi's *Threesome*.

Stand at the Cutting Edge

59E59 THEATERS

59 E. 59th St. | 212-279-4200 | 59e59.org

THE DRAMA is heating up this summer at the **59E59 Theaters** with special festivals, short works, and new plays. Catch the 5A Season kicking off on July 11 with Yussef El Guindi's play *Threesome*, directed by Chris Coleman. In the show, what starts out as a ridiculously awkward evening when one couple tries to solve their problems with a *ménage à trois* spirals into a night fraught with secrets, politics, and gender dynamics.

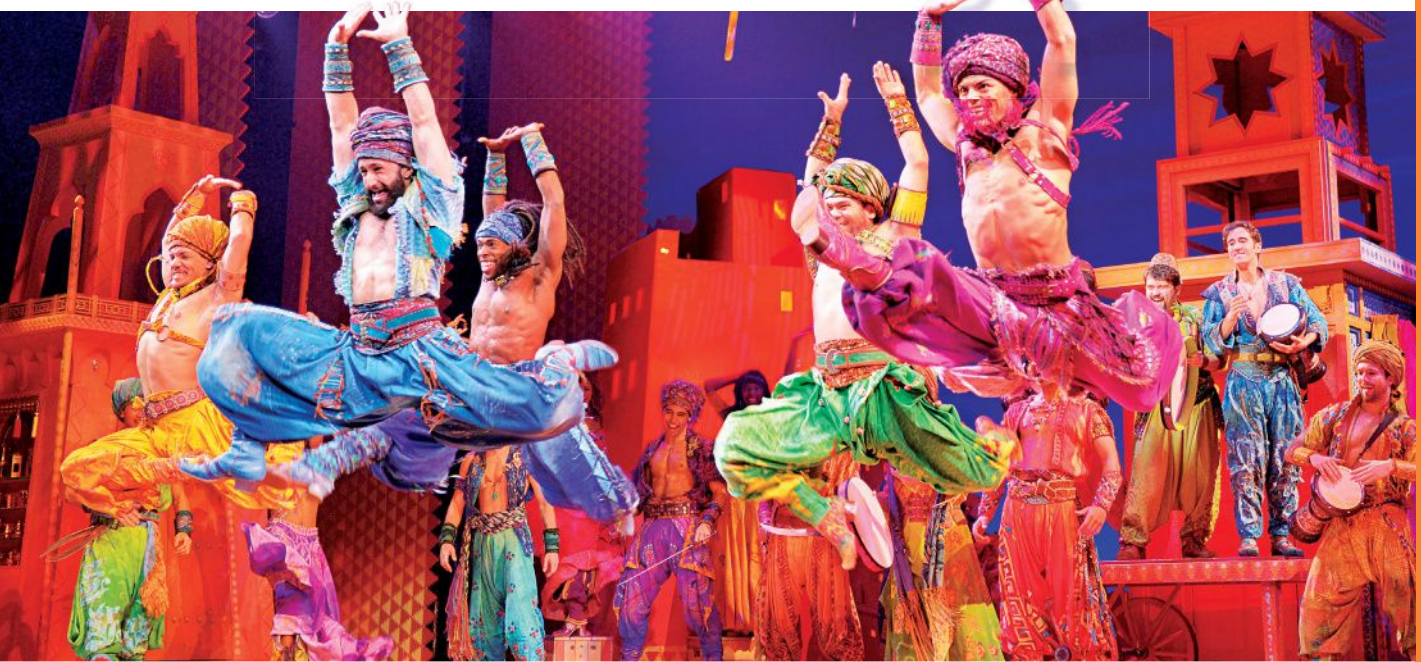
For theater lovers who can't make it to Scotland for the Fringe Fest (or for those who want a preview), get a sneak peek at what U.S. and Canadian companies will be performing at 59E59's annual East to Edinburgh festival running July 7 to 26. The closest thing to experiencing it firsthand on this side of the Atlantic for audiences and performers alike, the programming is not curated, the technical elements are kept to a minimum, and all shows begin promptly at their advertised time.

Also this season, Throughline Artists presents Summer Shorts (July 17-August 29), a festival spotlighting new American plays from Neil LaBute, Matthew Lopez, Robert O'Hara, Stella Fawn Ragsdale, Vickie Ramirez, and Lucy Thurber. Divided into two series of three plays, so you can easily see them all.



Photo by Jennifer Schatten, Schatten Studios

Discover a Whole New World With *Aladdin*



ALADDIN

New Amsterdam Theatre | 214 W. 42nd St. | 866-870-2717 | AladdinTheMusical.com

Broadway's hit musical comedy ***Aladdin*** is the highest grossing new show to open in the last four seasons, and a favorite with both critics and audiences alike. A spectacular experience of sight and sound, *Aladdin* features exhilarating choreography, captivating musical numbers, and astonishing visual effects you won't want to miss.

5 REASONS ALADDIN IS EXACTLY WHAT YOU WISHED FOR!

① TOPNOTCH PLAYLIST

In addition to the Oscar®-winning, number one hit "A Whole New World," *Aladdin* includes all of the songs from the 1992 film, as well as unforgettable new songs written especially for Broadway.

② MAGIC MOMENTS

With 84 sensational special effects—including pyrotechnics, lifts, transformations, and a magic carpet that actually flies—*Aladdin* is a breathtaking spectacle unlike any other on Broadway.

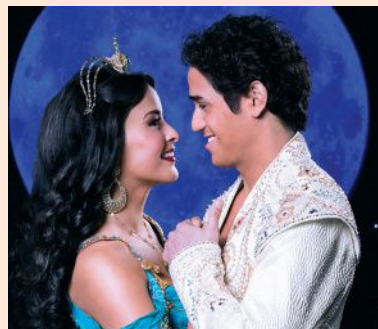


③ BROADWAY'S BEST BLING

The show's dazzling costumes are made from literally millions of Swarovski® crystals. In fact, just one costume piece used in the finale of "Friend Like Me" contains 1,428 sparkling beads!

④ ARMFULS OF ACCOLADES

Brought to Broadway by a standout creative team, *Aladdin* combines some of the stage's top talent. Collectively, they have won a total of 52 major awards, including 20 Grammy® Awards, 19 Tony Awards®, and 13 Academy Awards®.



⑤ A POWERHOUSE DIRECTOR

Over his brilliant career, Tony Award®-winning director and choreographer Casey Nicholaw has made his mark with the stage sensations *Spamalot*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, and currently *The Book of Mormon* and *Something Rotten!* His signature comedic style results in a standing ovation every night, and a show that is truly "musical comedy wish-fulfillment!" (*New York* magazine).



Photos of Courtney Reed, Adam Jacobs, James Monroe Iglehart and Original Broadway Company by Deen van Meer, Matthew Murphy and Cylla von Tiedemann

©Disney



Image © Bigstock

Make a Weekend of It

WASHINGTON, D.C.

202-789-7000 | washington.org

THE CAPITAL CITY is a vibrant, eclectic place to explore during the summer months. **Washington, D.C.**, offers experiences that no other city can, from the Smithsonian museums to a booming dining scene, art galleries, international festivals, and more.

Stop by the annual Smithsonian Folklife Festival, running July 1-5 on the lawn of the National Museum of the American Indian, to get a close-up look at different cultural heritages from around the world. As with all of the surrounding

Smithsonian museums, it's free and open to the public.

The rebellious Capital Fringe Festival runs throughout the summer months at a variety of venues around the city. This open-access, unjuried film festival is full of interesting self-produced works, with hundreds of inventive performances by new and established artists in a range of genres including drama, experimental, comedy, and musical theater.

And why not make a weekend of it? Check out the Capitol Hill farmers' market for everything from cupcakes to crab cakes. Explore the magnificent Library of Congress and the fascinating Supreme Court, and for an evening out, catch live jazz at Twins Jazz Lounge or take in a concert at the restored Howard Theatre on T Street.

Check out #WeGotThisWknd for a chance to win the ultimate VIP getaway to D.C. for the Landmark Music Festival on the National Mall September 26-27, plus a whole lot of other perks and goodies. See more and enter to win at facebook.com/washingtondc.



Photo by Azeez Nakare



Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Escape for a Day

THE CLOISTERS MUSEUM AND GARDENS

99 Margaret Corbin Dr., Fort Tryon Park | 212-923-3700 | metmuseum.org/cloisters

STAYCATIONS ARE BEST when you can escape and unwind in limited travel time. A trip to **The Cloisters Museum and Gardens**, the Metropolitan Museum's branch in Fort Tryon Park, will transport you to medieval Europe via only a bus or subway ride. At this urban oasis, you can explore the collection of magnificent sculpture, stained glass, and celebrated Unicorn Tapestries as well as the flowering courtyards and beautifully re-created gardens of the Middle Ages. One-hour weekend programs are offered throughout the summer in English and Spanish for kids and families on topics including

medieval entertainment, lions both fierce and friendly, and the adventures of knights.

On view through October 18, the special exhibition "Treasures and Talismans: Rings from the Griffin Collection" examines precious gold rings from the medieval and Renaissance periods worn by both men and women for adornment, status, and protection. Related works from the Met's collection highlight the connections between some three dozen rings and other works of art including painting, metalwork, and manuscript illumination. Family programs and exhibitions are free with Museum admission.

Take In a Rare Beauty

THE FRICK COLLECTION

1 E. 70th St. | 212-288-0700 | frick.org

PAINTER AND SCULPTOR Frederic Leighton was one of the most renowned artists of the Victorian era. Though he was the recipient of many honors during his lifetime, he left almost no followers and his impressive oeuvre was largely forgotten in the 20th century. Leighton's virtuoso technique, extensive preparatory process, and intellectual subject matter were at odds with the generation of painters raised on Impressionism. One of his last works, however, *Flaming June*, an idealized sleeping woman in a semi-transparent saffron gown, went on to enduring fame and is considered his masterpiece. Leighton's icon is on view in New York for the first time in more than thirty-five years this summer at **The Frick**.



Laugh Your Way Through Wedding Season

IT SHOULDA BEEN YOU

Brooks Atkinson Theatre | 256 W. 47th St.
877-250-2929 | ItShouldaBeenYou.com

TONY AWARD® WINNERS Tyne Daly and Harriet Harris lead an all-star cast, with Lisa Howard giving one of the most acclaimed and talked-about performances of the year, in Broadway's uproarious family affair ***It Shoulda Been You***. Directed by Emmy® and Tony Award winner David Hyde Pierce, this madcap musical boasts a blushing bride, nervous groom, overbearing moms, unexpected guests, and enough twists and turns to make even the most



Photo by Andrew Eccles

experienced wedding planner throw up his hands and cry "holy matrimony!" With great orchestra seats for as low as \$75, *It Shoulda Been You* will leave you

empowered, inspired, and laughing your nuptials off. See Lisa Howard's show-stopping performance at the 2015 Tony Awards at ItShouldaBeenYou.com.

Have a Ball at Cinderella

AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE

Metropolitan Opera House (Bway at 64th St.) | 212-362-6000 | abt.org

THERE IS NOTHING quite like a Cinderella story—especially when performed by the stunning **American Ballet Theatre** (ABT). Playing at the Metropolitan Opera House at Lincoln Center for a week this summer, from June 29 to July 4, this cherished rags-to-riches fairy tale is a delight for all ages—and kids can go free during the “Kids Go for Free” promotion, for the Wednesday,

July 1, matinee at 2 p.m., or the Saturday, July 4, evening performance at 7 p.m. (no Internet orders).

Performed to Sergei Prokofiev’s soaring score, Frederick Ashton’s *Cinderella* is a three-act stage fantasy that will mesmerize even the most devoted ballet fans with its sly wit and inventive choreography—culminating in a memorable final scene amid a

flurry of glitter. Colorful characters abound, including the stepsisters portrayed, as is the tradition, by male dancers who introduce a wonderful note of pantomime comedy. In a city of big dreamers and even bigger challenges, *Cinderella* remains a story of hope fulfilled—with some laughs along the way.



Hee Seo and James Whiteside in *Cinderella*.
Photo by Rosalie O'Connor.



Photo by Jason Brownrigg

See the Stars at MoMA

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 W. 53rd St. | 888-999-8861 | moma.org/membership

WHEN SCHOOL IS OUT for the summer, family membership at the **Museum of Modern Art** has special advantages, like the newly launched Summer 2015 Little Member Film Festival, starting July 8. On Wednesday evenings in the sculpture garden, this kid-approved series is free for family members and features films from MoMA's unparalleled collection, as well as educational activities.

Foster a love of museums in your kids and receive personalized membership

cards, plus unlimited access to MoMA's vast collection of modern and contemporary art, as well as discounts at the stores and cafés. Rated one of the best values for families in the city, MoMA thrills kids with fun exhibits like "Andy Warhol: Campbell's Soup Cans and Other Works, 1953-1967," on view through October 18, and permanent pieces like a Bell-47D1 helicopter suspended from the ceiling of the Architecture and Design Lobby on the third floor. (Parents will appreciate easy

stroller access and baby-changing stations on every floor.)

Members also get previews and early entry to blockbuster exhibits like "Picasso Sculpture," opening this September. A sweeping survey of his work, this monumental exhibition brings together more than 100 sculptures, as well as works on paper and photographs. When you join now, *New York* readers get an additional two months of membership free with the promo code NYM2M.



Heighten Your Perspective

UPSTAIRS AT THE KIMBERLY HOTEL

145 E. 50th Street | 212-888-1220 | upstairsnyc.com

BEAT THE MIDTOWN HEAT 30 stories up in a breathtaking urban oasis where you're surrounded by cascading living green walls framing a perfect view of the iconic Chrysler Building. **Upstairs at The Kimberly Hotel** overwhelms the senses at every turn with vintage theatrical lights and strings of Edison bulbs that float overhead, offering a fresh spin on old Hollywood glamour and create an intimate mood.

Relax and unwind in ultimate urban sophistication while dining on a Modern American menu that includes savory lamb lollipops, crispy artichokes, and Kobe beef sliders. Mingle under the stars while sipping light and refreshing signature cocktails like the Electrolyte, made with fresh watermelon and vodka, or the invigorating Watson, a gin-based cucumber martini. Resident DJs spin tunes with a backdrop of the city

skyline every Wednesday through Saturday nights.

On Saturday and Sunday afternoons, brunch is served Upstairs from 12-4pm, including dishes like lemon ricotta pancakes, baby kale goat cheese salad, and eggs benedict with prosciutto, along with a great menu of wine and champagne. Enjoy the beautiful weather on the open rooftop surrounded by an incredible view of New York City.

Get Hypnotized

PARK AVENUE ARMORY

643 Park Avenue (btw. 66-67th St.) | 212-933-5812 | armoryonpark.org

THE PARK AVENUE ARMORY is always a thrilling place to view art installations. The cavernous 55,000-square-foot drill hall allows artists to create—and audiences to experience—unconventional work that cannot be executed in many other spaces in the city.

This summer, in his largest U.S. installation to date, Philippe Parreno reshapes the very notion of what it means to experience art by exploring the exhibition as a singular, coherent object rather than as a collection of individual pieces. *H {N} Y P N(Y) OSIS* combines remastered existing works and new projects to guide and manipulate the viewer's experience and perception by fusing sound—both recorded and performed live by pianist Mikhail Rudy—with film, light, apparitions, and memory. Within one of the few spaces in the world in which such an epic experience

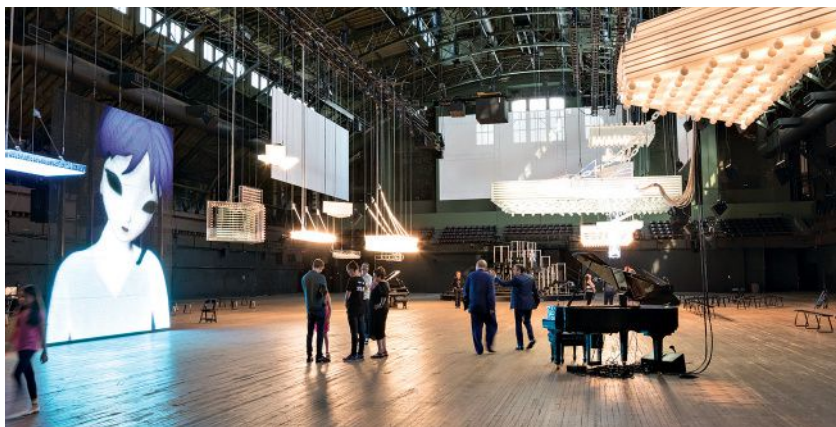


Photo by James Ewing

could occur, Parreno has constructed a scripted space where a series of events fold and unfold onto the space itself, creating an architecture of attention on a scale of operatic proportions.

On view through August 2, tickets are \$15. Go on a Friday evening, when the installation is open until 10:00pm, and enjoy libations at a special bar in one of the historic period rooms.



Experience the Inner Circle

THE LION KING

Minskoff Theatre | 200 W. 45th St. | 866-870-2717 | lionking.com

A GUIDE TO THE AMAZING OPENING SCENE OF *THE LION KING* ON BROADWAY

"Circle of Life," *The Lion King*'s jaw-dropping, much-talked-about opening number, introduces a menagerie of animals who stride, leap, gallop, and dance across the stage. A closer look reveals the creative magic at work behind this breathtaking bit of stagecraft.

- ① **Let's give them a hand:** Julie Taymor, along with Michael Curry, designed, hand sculpted, and painted every prototype mask in this scene. Each mask receives regular touch-ups at the backstage "puppet hospital."
- ② **The view from the top:** Pride Rock rises 12 feet over the African savannah five times during each performance.
- ③ **A real lightweight:** Mufasa's mask, like others in the show, is made of carbon fiber (the same stuff airplanes are made of) and weighs less than a pound.
- ④ **Accent on authenticity:** To capture the intangible spirit and sound of the savannah, seven South Africans perform with every company around the world except Japan, where the local artists mastered the pronunciation of the three different African languages used in the show.
- ⑤ **Ladder of success:** The tallest animals in the iconic opening number are the exotic giraffes at 14 feet high. Two actors climb six-foot ladders to fit inside the puppets, mount stilts, and enter stage left.
- ⑥ **Make room for Bertha:** At 13 feet long and nine feet wide, the elephant, nicknamed "Bertha," is the largest animal in the show, requiring four cast members to maneuver her down the aisles of the Minskoff Theatre. Rear-of-house theatre access doors all over the world have been renovated and restructured to give her space for her initial entrance. After the performance, however, the costume collapses down to store easily.
- ⑦ **Quick-change artist:** One Ensemble Dancer part requires 16 costume changes. Some actors have to perform quick changes in less than a minute.

Soak Up the New View

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

99 Gansevoort Street | whitney.org

AFTER DECADES ON the Upper East Side, the **Whitney**'s unparalleled collection of modern and contemporary American art is now at home in a breathtaking new space in the Meatpacking District designed by renowned architect Renzo Piano. In the heart of the contemporary art scene, snug between the High Line and the Hudson, and housed in a light-filled space with magnificent views of the river, the Whitney's artwork is a

joy to take in on a summer afternoon.

The inaugural exhibition, *America Is Hard to See*, spans the entire building and features more than 600 works by some 400 artists including Georgia O'Keeffe, Marsden Hartley, Edward Hopper, Andy Warhol, Alice Neel, Chuck Close, and many others. The exhibition's narrative is divided into twenty-three thematic chapters organized chronologically, with titles like "Fighting With All Our Might" and "Threat and

Sanctuary" installed throughout the building, offering a retrospective of American art from the beginning of the 20th century to the present.

With more than 13,000 square feet of outdoor exhibition space and a restaurant and cafe operated by Danny Meyer, it's easy to spend a full day. The Whitney is open until 10 pm on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays through the summer. Tip: Buy your tickets online to skip the admissions line when you arrive.



View from Gansevoort Street. Photographed by Ed Lederman, 2015.

Get Rowdy Off-Broadway

RUTHLESS!

St. Luke's Theatre | 308 W. 46th St.
212-239-6200 | RuthlessTheMusical.com

BROADWAY LOVERS (and haters!) rejoice, because the funniest and bloodiest musical about what it takes to make a child a star is returning to Off-Broadway! ***Ruthless!*** begins performances June 25, with book and lyrics by Joel Paley and music by Marvin Laird.

Tina Denmark is a pretty, charming, diabolical eight-year-old who was born to entertain." With the encouragement of slick and overbearing agent Sylvia St. Croix, Tina will do anything to play the lead in her school play, and we mean *anything*. The question is, where did she get such remarkable talent and unstoppable ambition? The answer may shock you. It's *The Bad Seed* meets *Gypsy*, and fun for the whole dysfunctional family.

Ruthless! first appeared Off-Broadway 22 years ago at the Players Theatre, winning both the Drama Desk Award for Best Lyrics and the Outer Critics

Circle Award for Best Musical. But make no mistake, this is not your mother's *Ruthless!* This is no mere revival, but a newly imagined meditation on narcissism, talented tykes, and stage mothers in a world that has since been introduced to *Toddlers & Tiaras* and *Honey Boo Boo*.

The reimagined version of *Ruthless!* is, as co-creator Joel Paley says, "streamlined into 90 minutes that is roller-coaster sharp and fast."



Photo: Tori Murray & Kim Maresca
by Carol Rosegg





Tickle Your Funny Bone

MY SON THE WAITER

Stage 72 at The Triad Theatre
158 W. 72nd Street | 212-868-4444
MySonTheWaiter.com

BRAD ZIMMERMAN moved to New York City and “temporarily” waited tables for 29 years, while pursuing his dream of comedic acting. He never gave up and lo these many years later, he’s opened for the likes of Joan Rivers and the famed George Carlin. **My Son the Waiter** is Zimmerman’s hilarious and inspiring story about the grit and passion required to “make it” as an artist and the sweet rewards that come . . . eventually.

From this unique and original voice in the world of comedy comes a one-man show that is as profound as it is entertaining. True to the show’s self-deprecating subtitle, “A Jewish Tragedy,” Zimmerman’s send-ups of childhood, family, his misbegotten love life, and his career are as warm and poignant as they are hysterical. Hear his tales of working with comedy-greats and entertainers including Brad Garrett, Dennis Miller, Susie Essman, and Julio Iglesias, in a show that the *Huffington Post* claims will make you “laugh your tuchas off.”

Elevate Your After-Work Experience

MAD46 ROOFTOP LOUNGE

The Roosevelt Hotel
Madison Avenue at 46th St.
212-885-6095 | mad46.com

HANG OUT HIGH ABOVE the steamy pavement this summer at the newly renovated **mad46 Rooftop Lounge** on the nineteenth floor of The Roosevelt Hotel. This is the place to mix and mingle with midtown’s hottest after-work crowd, featuring specialty cocktails and lite bites, indoor and outdoor bars with bistro tables, comfortable lounge seating and spectacular views of the city. This summer, enjoy Martini Mondays and Tequila Tuesdays, or join one of the mixologists or wine experts for a complimentary learning experience featuring their favorite cocktails in “The Tale of a Cocktail” events. There’s also a full season of rooftop movie nights including delectable eats and drinks for a quintessential New York moment.



Sammy Todd Dyess Photography



See Shakespeare Under the Stars

FREE SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK

The Delacorte Theater in Central Park | 212-967-7555 | Publictheater.org

FREE SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK

continues at The Delacorte Theater in Central Park this summer with *The Tempest* directed by Michael Greif and *Cymbeline* directed by Daniel Sullivan. Academy Award nominee Sam Waterston and Jesse Tyler Ferguson return to The Delacorte in *The Tempest*, now through July 5, performing Shakespeare's classic tale of young love, old enemies, and the eternal magic of storytelling.

From July 23 through August 23, Tony Award® winner Daniel Sullivan directs the Shakespearean fairy tale *Cymbeline*, featuring Teagle F. Bougere, Kate Burton, Raúl Esparza, David Furr, Hamish Linklater, Jacob Ming-Trent, Patrick Page, Lily Rabe, and Steven Skybell. Cross-dressing girls and boys, poisons and swordfights, and dastardly villains all take the stage in this enchanting romp about the conquering power of love.



Photo by Tammy Shell

Free tickets are distributed on performance days at noon online at publictheater.org, at The Delacorte Theater, and via lottery downtown at Astor Place. Or skip the line altogether when you make a \$200 tax-deductible donation to support Free

Shakespeare in the Park and receive a reserved seat to one performance this season. All performances begin at 8pm and take place at The Delacorte Theater in Central Park. Get your tickets now for this quintessential New York summer experience.

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Fears of a Clown

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 47

clowns. They freak me out.” The party was a collision of eras, the clown a quaint throwback figure amid an array of oppressively themed action-movie paraphernalia from Costco (*Transformers* cake, *Transformers* piñata, *Transformers* goody bags). While Boswick’s act kept the kids laughing, a little blond boy named Anthony kept hijacking the show, at one point grabbing Boswick’s leg and not letting go for several minutes. As Anthony held on, he buried his head between Boswick’s legs, thus treating the parents to an extended display of a middle-aged man in makeup clomping around with a young boy’s face planted in his crotch. A mother in the front row looked aghast, her face frozen in a wince.

A little girl asked Boswick if he’s “a real clown,” which he suavely deflected with “You found out” (one of hundreds of rejoinders from *Hey Quit Clowning Around!*, his self-published book of “funny comebacks” for entertainers who find themselves in such situations). By the end of the show, though, the clowns-freak-me-out mom was laughing as hard as anyone, and Boswick’s favorite part was the leg-hugger. “That’s just magical stuff, ‘cause he was so hilarious, and that’s when you get to be a clown. It’s like, *What’s the clown going to do? Is he going to get mad?*”

Boswick’s final show of the day, up in Vallejo, proved the most challenging. He is practiced at handling the varied subcultures of the far-flung Bay Area. He’s used to dealing with Berkeley parents with delusions of gender equivalency. “I’ll hear a lot, ‘Well, my kids, the boys don’t care about weapons and things.’ And you’re like, ‘Uh-huh.’ Boys are boys. They want to beat each other. When you make balloon animals, they want swords. They want guns. They want AK-47s. They get really specific. And girls want flowers and pink, unless they don’t.” But tonight’s show, a big one for a Filipino family in a VFW catering hall, was chaos from the get-go. A DJ was playing loud dance music, there was a face painter competing for the audience’s attention, a huge spread of food anchored by lechón asado beckoned, a 49ers banner hung disruptively near his head, and the kids were overtired and aggressive.

Boswick had noticed lately that he’d been getting a lot less work from the Filipino community, and he wondered whether the scary-clown meme had “infected” it, too. But as he drove back to the city he was mostly upbeat. “What was really nice about the middle party today, and I guess the early one, too, is I was able to give them live entertainment, a live show, a very specific thing—theater for children, for families, designed to their event and their place—and that’s pretty cool.”

MAGIDSON DIDN’T START out with big dreams to tie balloon poodles for the kiddie set. “I remember telling my roommate I wanted to be a clown and saying I didn’t want to be a birthday-party clown—I wanted to be a stage clown, a theater clown,” he said.

But Ringling wasn’t for him—the pay was awful, the lifestyle family-unfriendly—and his theatrical work never took off either. Kloons on Ice, his three-person clown troupe that had nothing to do with ice, didn’t make it past the fringe-festival circuit, and the two other members ended up leaving the business. He was making some money as a children’s entertainer, but he was reluctant to define himself as one—“It’s sort of frowned on, what I do”—and the ambivalence held him back from being more successful.

When he turned 30, in 1993, he considered giving up clowning altogether. He had gotten married, and his wife was pregnant, and he seriously thought about getting certified to become a schoolteacher. But then he took a series of workshops at Landmark Forum, and they helped him face facts: He’d been waiting for a career instead of making one happen. He took the plunge and bought an ad in the *Yellow Pages*; as the only San Francisco clown with Ringling on his résumé, he started getting a lot of work.

The economics of clowning are tough. After 9/11, the going rate for a show dropped from \$300 to \$250, which Magidson often discounts as low as \$175. And of the 250-plus shows he does a year, a significant fraction are for charity in places like hospital cancer wards. He made around \$30,000 last year.

Although he’d prefer to spend his time exclusively clowning, he has taken all kinds of work over the years to supplement his income. He worked for a Filipino fast-food company, Jollibee, dispatching other entertainers to its Bay Area franchises. For a time, he had a contract booking balloon-makers into a particular Red Lobster restaurant. Some of the jobs have nothing to do with clown-

ing. He recently trained with a company called iCracked to fix iPhones with broken screens, and he’s considering driving for Uber.

Magidson’s middle-class anxieties come into conflict with his aversion to authority, and he doesn’t always think things through. A sideline as a substitute schoolteacher got sidelined after he was discovered to have been filming an irreverent YouTube series, *Hey Mr. Sub!*, in vacant classrooms. (He was escorted from the building.) At a Clown College reunion years ago, he performed a stand-up set, including a joke about organizing a summer picnic for NAMBLA—“We need a bouncy house, we need a clown, we need balloons”—that became notorious. Another time, he was approached to appear on *Wife Swap*. He thought it would be good for name recognition, until his wife said: “That’s unseemly.” “I cringe a lot,” Magidson told me. “I don’t cringe at my clowning. I cringe at David.”

The constant dispute in Magidson’s head, between the voice that asks, “What am I doing with my life?” and the one that says, “This is what I am called to do,” reflects a frustrating synchronicity: He is maturing into something the world no longer seems to want. The better he gets, the more he has to slum it as a non-clown entertainer: a strolling juggler at a software-company event, say, or a balloon-tier at a mall-kiosk wireless-service promotion. “You do need to do what you need to do,” he told me. He’s been a pirate, a jester, a vaudeville juggler, an elf, the Easter bunny. For a long time he wouldn’t do Santa at Christmas, but six years ago he caved, and he has since done it a lot—it’s lucrative, and he enjoys it. He has been steadfast in his refusal to do face painting, an oft-requested service, because he views it as a technical skill having nothing to do with a character. A few months ago, for the first and last time, he did Spider-Man. He felt ridiculous crawling around in the outfit, and the character made no sense—he was a Spider-Man who tied balloon animals.

Even when Boswick can focus solely on being a clown, he is hyperaware of his place in the entertainer hierarchy, quick to take offense at the haughtiness of magicians and at the snootiness among clowns from San Francisco’s Clown Conservatory, whose ambitions lie more in the direction of Cirque du Soleil than the local birthday-party market. He can be snooty, too, about the Shriners and other retirees for whom clowning is a golden-years lark. “I look down quite a bit on the amateur clowns,” he said. “I can’t help it.”

Any number of times, Boswick has thought he was on the verge of striking it

big. A DVD he made, *Here Comes the Clown*, got library distribution but never really took off, though he still occasionally gets phone calls from strange parts of the country. (Usually the calls go like this: “Is this Boswick?” “Yup.” “Are you really Boswick?” “Yup, that’s me.” “Is Phoebe the Duck there?” “She’s out back.” And then they just hang up on me.”) With his friend Pat in the Hat, he created a business called Clowns-4Less, which he hoped could scale his income by creating Boswick-trained cheaper clowns who’d pay him a royalty, but then the internet removed all barriers to entry and the market was flooded by self-styled clowns at the same low rate. He imagined that *Hey Mr. Sub!* might inspire a sitcom. Last year, he and Funnybone and Pat in the Hat were up for a possible reality show on TruTV that would focus on them and on Boswick’s longtime feud with his clown neighbor Sparky.

Sparky and Boswick had a friendly relationship until the launch of Clowns-4Less, which Sparky felt was a direct attack on his livelihood. “I called them Scabs for Less,” Sparky (né Brian Wishnepsky) told me, referring to Boswick and Pat in the Hat. “We’re still suffering for it now, having to compete against schlock-meisters and hacks. Boswick said: ‘Well, it’s just business.’ I said: ‘No, it’s like shitting in your own bed.’ Neither one of them were rocket scientists, that’s all I can say.” Sparky acquired several confusingly similar URLs, including Clown4Less and ClownFourLess. “I covered all my bases. I couldn’t believe how dumb they were. It was like clown wars. Then I bought Boswick’s URL. He’s got Boswick.net. I got BoswickTheClown.” Sparky and Boswick eventually reconciled, but they were prepared to restage their conflicts for TruTV’s cameras. The cable channel ended up passing on the show.

Magidson still feels bad about the sacrifices his family has had to make. He can’t pay for a vacation that requires getting on a plane. His wife’s job, as a manager at the theater where she and Magidson met as young box-office workers, supplies their health insurance. A generous in-law contributed the down payment for their house. Their younger son, Dustin, attends the progressive, private Urban School, in Haight-Ashbury, courtesy of a sizable scholarship, and Magidson’s mother helps with the college tuition for their elder son, Duncan.

Having a clown for a parent has its advantages, of course. Since most of Boswick’s work is on weekends, he was able to be an unusually present and available father during the week. Throughout his sons’ childhoods, he always made a point

of hiring live entertainment for their birthdays (bird and reptile and science shows, though, not clowns or magicians). And there was no shortage of playfulness in the Magidson home. When Boswick’s wife, Diane, arrives home from work, her husband and sons are invariably sprawled across the floor, playing dead. She steps over them. “The thing with clowns, the jokes don’t change all that much,” she told me. “It was funny the first two or three times.”

It’s not that Diane, whom Boswick calls Zelda Washbucket when referring to her during a show, can’t be a good sport. At their wedding, she went along with the plan for her and David and their attendants to simultaneously turn to face the guests wearing clown noses. But after nearly every guest at one of her post-marital birthday parties brought her a clown-related gift (clown candlesticks, clown picture frames), she announced a ban on “clown crap” and allows only a single clown item—a painting of father-and-son hobo clowns, given by her uncle—to hang in their living quarters. She described marriage to a clown as “living with someone who always wants attention.” Sometimes he will come home, undress, and run around in his makeup and underwear. “And that is why people are afraid of clowns,” she said. “This is not a good look.” Diane’s sister is married to Boswick’s old Kloons colleague Woody. “My poor mother,” Diane said.

Duncan and Dustin never knew a world without clowns. They appeared as little clowns in their father’s videos and helped him with his theater shows, Dustin handling sound and lights and Duncan taking tickets. Duncan went through a phase of being mortified by what his father did and insisting he not tell anyone. Boswick agreed not to volunteer the information, and he also agreed to fully recline the driver’s seat, lying out of view, if he ever came to pick Duncan up from junior high while he was still in makeup from a gig. Once, he made the mistake of getting out of the car, sending his son into a fury that lasted a month. “Yeah, when I was a little kid, I was kind of bitter about it all the time,” Duncan told me. “I’ve come to accept it.” Now it’s a fun fact to reveal to new friends, who tend to find it fascinating. He’ll show them YouTube videos of his dad in costume. Halloween is Duncan’s favorite holiday, and he described the easy access to costumes, makeup, and expertise in applying it as “probably the greatest thing about having a dad who’s a clown.”

Dustin, now a high-school junior, has never been as bothered by his father’s job, though he usually describes it as “children’s

entertainer.” “Whenever I say ‘clown,’ people will say it extremely loudly, and I’m like, ‘Stop it.’ And then people who do know will say it loud just to bug me.”

LAST YEAR, BOSWICK had an experience that made him feel better about what he does. He went to his second Clown College reunion. It was in Florida—attended by around 275 graduates, plus circus fans from around the state—and this time he skipped the NAMBLA jokes. “People were like, ‘Are you going to do that thing you did last time?’” Instead, he volunteered to clean up between acts, and whenever there was a lull, he’d come out dressed as Boswick and intersperse his little routines while he cleaned. “Every time, I got about 32 seconds, but it killed. It was like coming home: *Wow, this is what I trained for, this is what I’m good at.*”

I joined Boswick and Funnybone and their friends Super Gigi and Sandra Leathley one night for dinner at a restaurant in Haight-Ashbury. Boswick and Funnybone originally met when they figured out years ago that they had both been receiving discomfiting calls from the same lonely latchkey kid, a girl named Regan, and they spoke on the phone to confer about it. They later became such good friends that Boswick paid for Funnybone to do Landmark, which is also where Boswick first met Super Gigi, who specializes in strolling characters with names like T-Ruth the Funky Psychic and Audrey Heartburn. Sandra, a face painter, had booked Boswick into a bunch of Santa gigs this past Christmas, and he was buying her dinner to express his gratitude.

The group naturally gravitated toward shoptalk. Sandra had only one gig the coming weekend, doing glitter tattoos. She talked about having to sign NDAs for some of her Silicon Valley clients. Funnybone passed around his iPhone 6 with a video of the large stateroom he’d been given while performing on a recent three-week South American cruise.

Boswick related a dream he’d had the night before of appearing on *The Daily Show With Jon Stewart* as a clown correspondent, and he told a story about the time he was chased in his car while wearing a clown outfit. Boswick and Funnybone talked about the confounding rise in negativity about clowns. “I never used to like clowns,” Sandra admitted, recounting a traumatizing early Ringling experience in which a clown ran up to her and shot his flag gun. “My brother hated clowns,” Boswick said. “Before caller ID, you’d get calls—‘I’m going to kill you,’” Funnybone said. He and Boswick laughed. ■



Lyft

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All those handouts to drivers and passengers add up. Lyft is profitable in its more mature markets, like San Francisco, the company says. But in many other cities it is not. TechCrunch recently reported that the company expects to spend \$150 million signing up new passengers and \$50 million signing up new drivers.

And though the company's expansion has been touted as a success—it has gone from serving one market to serving 65 and reportedly expects to double its revenue in 2016—there have been missteps. Unlike Uber, which had contentiously but successfully moved into the New York market by licensing its drivers with the Taxi and Limousine Commission, Lyft pressed ahead last summer without doing so.

New York's public officials did not take kindly to the decision. "As it has done in every other city in which it operates, [the] defendant has simply waltzed into New York and set up shop while defying every law passed whose very purpose is to protect the People of the State of New York," the attorney general's office declared. "Despite being warned and told to cease and desist by three separate regulatory and enforcement agencies, defendant has thumbed its nose at the law and continued with its plan to launch in what could become its largest market." A weeks-long standoff was ultimately resolved when Lyft agreed to do what Uber had done. Now Lyft in New York offers an essentially identical service to Uber's, if with fewer drivers.

FORD AND GENERAL MOTORS. American and United. Target and Walmart. The great American consumer market is full of examples of rivalries that nudged businesses to innovate, drop prices, and refine their goods and services. Sometimes those rivalries are fairly evenly matched, but often they are not. Remember Hertz and Avis?

Back in the early 1960s, also-ran Avis—a smaller, less successful business than Hertz—decided to run a new advertising campaign, one that embraced its market position rather than trying to change it. "When you're only No. 2, you try harder. Or else," the company's advertisements read.

Avis's initial business insight was to locate its cars at airports, not in downtowns, but its most ingenious one was to play up its inferior position. It focused on its newer fleet and better customer service, promising, "We're always emptying ashtrays," and "Since we're not the big fish, you won't feel like a sardine when you come to our counter." The strategy worked: The company moved from the red to the black and expanded its market share—even, within a few years, coming close to beating Hertz.

It makes sense: Differentiate in order to compete. Upscale or downscale. Don't go head to head. And so Lyft is driving away from it again—or, rather, doubling down on what made it different in the first place. "We've gotten to or are getting to scale in all our cities," Zimmer told me. "What's the next experiential push that helps us realize the broader vision?"

In the company's converted-warehouse headquarters in the Mission, there are row after row of sitting-standing desks, a hidden *Downton Abbey*-style parlor accessible by pushing on a large, gold-framed painting, and a dining room where employees enjoy a hot-cooked lunch at communal tables. Upstairs, in an airy studio blocked off by a barn door, Jesse McMillin, Lyft's first creative director, pondered that broader vision.

McMillin looks like a Warby Parker model. (The day of our interview, he was wearing a pair of boxy pastel glasses.) He came to Lyft from Virgin America, and argues that his new employer should distinguish itself from Uber along the same lines as the airline has from its competitors. Air travel has become a distinctly unpleasant commodity: Consumers purchase tickets almost exclusively on the basis of route, schedule, and price, with the differences between airlines fading away by virtue of relentless cost-cutting and industry mergers—save for a few standouts, including Virgin America and JetBlue. "A lot of bigger airlines had forgotten that it mattered, the experience," McMillin said. "People didn't want to be cattle put into a tube and flown across the country. You could separate yourself from the rest of the crowd by doing the little things right and bring that little touch of magic."

At Virgin America, that magic included bold red branding, decent enough Wi-Fi, and the guarantee of touchscreen-enabled televisions at every seat, including the squished ones in the way back. It also included some smart marketing, like a safety video McMillin oversaw that went viral. The strategy has shown results: Virgin America topped *Consumer Reports'* 2013 airlines rankings. On the other hand, when was the last time a viral safety video persuaded you to pay for an airline ticket?

And Lyft faces challenges unique to its position as tech disrupter. It does not own its fleet of cars, unlike Virgin, which owns its fleet of planes. Moreover, it legally cannot dictate much about the passenger's experience within the car. Lyft's entire business model is predicated on its drivers' being independent contractors, not employees.

Granted, those drivers appear to like working for Lyft better than for Uber. As of this spring, according to Campbell, the smaller company paid better in 42 markets, with Uber shelling out more in eight. And Campbell says Lyft's friendliness is even more attractive. "At the end of the day, when you're doing something like ten, 20, 30 hours a week, you want it to feel as little like a job as you can," he says. But the more control Lyft exerts, the stronger the legal argument those drivers have that they aren't simply freelancers relying on an app.

Several lawsuits are already pressing for Uber, Lyft, and a number of other on-demand economy businesses to reclassify their independent contractors as employees—a move that could force the companies to supply workers with health benefits, unemployment insurance, workers' compensation, and reimbursement for expenses, as well as pay the employer portion of the payroll tax. In a sign of where that fight might be headed, the California Labor Commission just ordered Uber to pay restitution to a driver it redefined as an employee—a decision Uber is currently appealing.

Given the delicate legal environment, Lyft has only a few ways to enhance the Lyft experience: the app, the branding, and the corporate culture. It puts an extraordinary amount of effort into building a community of drivers and passengers—throwing parties, launching a "perks" program, following its drivers on social media. It encourages them to develop a little quirk, like handing out cookies to passengers or having costumes in the car to take selfies with. On the app, the company has added social features to help passengers and drivers get to know each other. Zimmer, for instance, knew that Larry was from the East Coast when he hopped in his Subaru.

Lyft has also placed a major emphasis on customer support, safety, and being a more desirable option for women. Unusually among tech firms, nearly half of Lyft's top executives are women, as well as more than half of its riders and a third of its San Francisco drivers. Lyft has a large safety team and guarantees that you can get a human being on the phone if something has gone wrong.

More broadly, Lyft is concentrating on ride-sharing, as Uber moves into offering other concierge-type services—package messengering, food delivery—and under-

goes a massive international expansion. The company is working to make Lyft an option for virtually anyone who needs a ride: for parents to pick up children, for companies to help their employees with transit. “The future of Lyft is ride-sharing,” Weiss of Andreessen Horowitz told me. “I want you to understand that completely.”

It’s possible that Uber might one day decide to try to crush Lyft once and for all by dropping its prices for riders and paying out bonuses to drivers. Or that Uber won’t even have to, because of the brutality of network effects in disruptive consumer tech products. But it’s also possible that ... well, anything’s possible. Zimmer told me that the company’s goal is for everyone who owns a car to have Lyft installed on their smartphone and to get signed up as a driver. “Anybody with a car is a driver,” he repeated, as did no fewer than five other people there. Perhaps the 1099 economy will come crashing down, and when everyone’s drivers are reclassified as employees, the playing field will be leveled. Perhaps Uber will collapse from its own weight. Perhaps there really is a multibillion-dollar ride-sharing economy being born.

When Icahn was mulling his Lyft invest-

ment a few weeks ago, he considered the many warnings and dismissed them for a few reasons. Lyft is gaining market share in many places. Uber might not want to spend the money it would take to undercut Lyft on costs. “A price war? That works if you’re Rockefeller in the 1800s trying to get control of the oil market,” he said. “But given how much money Lyft has raised and the deep pockets of its investors, I don’t see how it could make sense for Uber to try to just give rides away for nothing.”

Icahn invested not for any inventive initiative schemed up by McMillin’s team, or because he thinks there’s much purchase in the utopian transportation system of Zimbabwe. He invested because, in his mind, there is room for two modestly differentiated but ultimately substitutable services, especially when one company is 20 times cheaper to invest in. “It’s a transportation service,” he said. “You have multiple airlines, multiple cruise lines. And all of those companies have differentiated themselves over time. To have only one player in this space just doesn’t sound logical to me.” No one in Silicon Valley wants to admit they’re in second place—but sometimes you don’t have to. Simply *being* No. 2 might be enough. ■



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not enough sense to stop having kids. Mormons are like baby factories.”

Although Dennis bought his oldest son a saxophone and taught him how to play it, the family was appalled when he rejected Mormon ideals and began playing jazz in nightclubs. “Mormons were very prejudiced. To be a jazz musician, you have to think black, live black, be black.” One night, a carload of musicians came to the Young house to pick up La Monte for a recording session. His step-grandfather Leonard went to the car and said, “You coons go home.” “I had to get my horn, because my family had hidden it. I ran up the street, got in the car, and I never went back.” Young played with jazz superstars Ornette Coleman, Don Cherry, and Billy Higgins, and beat out Eric Dolphy for a spot in an L.A. dance band.

At the University of California, Berkeley in 1958, while earning a master’s degree and scandalizing the school with his music and appearance (goatee, beret, long hair), Young dated poet Diane Wakoski, with whom he moved to New York before they split up. They were nearly a trio—Wakoski bore a daughter but put her up for adoption. “Diane and I were very poor at the time,” says Young, who’s never before discussed having a child. “Diane didn’t want to give the child away, particularly. But with my background, Mormon baby-makers, I couldn’t take it. I wanted to do music.”

“Within weeks” of Young’s arrival in New York, says the composer and concept artist Henry Flynt, “he’d taken over. All of a sudden, we were all at the end of strings that he’s holding in his hand.” He met and charmed or dazzled everyone worth knowing. He curated a series of concerts at Yoko Ono’s Soho loft (monthly rent: \$50.50) that reshaped culture in New York. Flynt recalls giving a performance in Ono’s loft “that largely consisted of pacing the floor.” According to Young, he and Ono had an affair.

“There was an enormous concentration of artists all living in a 20-block radius,” says Chatham. “I can’t begin to say what a sensation that series created. La Monte didn’t need records out to be influential,



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marvelous,” he says. “Our job, as architects, is to observe an accident like that, then reproduce it on purpose.”

Nouvel has made a relatively light mark on New York, with just two residential buildings—40 Mercer Street, a deluxe riff on the theme of the cast-iron Soho building, and 100 11th Avenue, with its convex, discoball façade of varicolored windows, plus the Brooklyn Bridge Park lagniappe of Jane’s Carousel. But he’s about to join a different club of architects: those with access to the upper reaches of the Manhattan skyline. His 1,050-foot MoMA Tower is finally going up, a bundle of crystalline spears shooting out of midtown.

This is one stack of plutocrat pads that earns its spot on the skyline. When it’s built, the tower will seem like an object in motion, its palette edging into silver and gold on the

way to the clouds. Three pointy slivers fit together like bits of slate, bound by diagonal concrete straps, a motif doubled on the façade by aluminum panels. Despite his bitterness that Amanda Burden, when she was planning commissioner, cut 200 feet off his design, Nouvel draws energy from Manhattan’s restrictive zoning and rigid grid. “Architecture is the art of utilizing constraints. If you can do whatever you want, then it’s not architecture anymore.”

That evening, the developers of his midtown tower have organized a party in his honor at MoMA, which proves to be an exercise in glittering idolatry. A huge mirrored sculpture of the skyscraper glows on a pedestal, a real-estate totem that I half-expect to start shooting jets of chilled vodka. Nouvel admires it a little blankly, then drifts out into the sculpture garden, trailed by a camera crew that records his every pleasantries. Two of his grizzled peers, Richard Meier and Steven Holl, are standing by to embrace him, and the three rival kings pose for photographs as if they were all on the same team. Slender people clutching slender flutes of bubbly swirl toward Nouvel on plumes of chatter, and he says little, eking out slightly crooked smiles. He catches my eye and shrugs. *You see?* he signals: *This is what they put me through, all this luxe and volupté, when what I want is calme.* ■

because anybody who was anybody was going to those concerts. Yoko's loft was the internet."

In addition to his hard work, charm, and audacity, Young had another social advantage: He was dealing drugs. Warhol acolyte Billy Name has said Young "was the best drug connection in New York." "La Monte had hash flown in, concealed in greeting cards," Flynt explains. His deputy dealer was Cale, who wrote in a memoir that he had moved to New York "to sit at [Young's] feet." Young was briefly jailed in 1964; Cale says police had found half an ounce of opium in his loft.

Young invited Cale to join the Theatre of Eternal Music, a group that performed long drones, with only a few notes, at extreme volumes (120 to 130 decibels), creating overtones and phantom notes that ring in the ears even though they don't exist. Some listeners "fled from the physical pain of the volume after two minutes," Ron Rosenbaum wrote in the *Village Voice* in 1970.

They rehearsed every night, for up to six hours. They got high before every concert. "Hashish milkshakes were a feature at one point," adds trumpeter Jon Hassell, who played with them. "The performances were ecstatic, in a very controlled way." When Tony Conrad joined on violin, Young allocated him only one note.

The drones they played, inspired by Young's interest in North Indian music, replaced the 12-note vocabulary of Western music with a set of pitches that have a whole-number mathematical relationship to one another. Proponents of just intonation, as it's called, believe the 12-note system is chronically out of tune and harmful to our health—as well as the by-product of a conspiracy that involves, depending on whom you ask, the Illuminati, Zionists, the Catholic Church, and the Nazis.

"Are you aware of the 528 movement?" asks Jon Catler, a guitarist who plays with Young. He's referring to people who believe in the healing power of music in which a C is retuned to 528 hertz. "Supposedly, these frequencies can be used to repair DNA. It's the frequency of hemoglobin and chlorophyll. It's kind of a life-giving frequency. This information was known hundreds of years ago, but was buried and secreted. Now there's a global community waking up to this fact. It can't be suppressed any longer."

Anyone accustomed to conventional music will hear just intonation as odd and askew, though its advocates insist the opposite is true. "It's almost like if you've been eating McDonald's hamburgers all your life, and someone gives you an apple," says Catler.

LIKE ALL GENIUSES, genuine or self-proclaimed, Young has often been surrounded by acolytes, including some who work for free. "He had a reputation of having many slaves working for him," Chatham says. Arnold Dreyblatt, a composer who now lives in Germany, became an assistant in the mid-'70s and also uses the word "slave" when recalling that time. "I cherish him as a teacher. He's an egomaniac, which is fine, because a lot of artists are. And he was always obsessive." Dreyblatt recalls getting a lesson in proper vacuum cleaning from Young, who treated it as seriously as a composition class. "It was insane. But even in the worst of times, he had a charm that kept you in."

Their guru was part of the package, too. Young and Zazeela became disciples of Pandit Pran Nath, a master of kirana singing, a Hindustani style that involves tiny gradations of pitch; they studied with him for 26 years, and he lived in their Tribeca loft until he died in 1996. "We were happy to take care of him night and day," Young says. One of Young's former assistants, who requested anonymity, was less happy about it. "Pandit Pran Nath started sending me out for beer, and he was drunk all the time. He was running after me, and drunk."

The daughter Young and Wakoski placed for adoption, whose name is Leann, tracked down her birth parents years later. (Young offered to teach her music, but she declined.) She's a bookkeeper, living in a town near Sacramento, and her online profile lists Christina Aguilera and Keith Urban among her favorite musicians, which makes a good case for the effect of nurture over nature. Young and Zazeela, married since 1963, never had children. Kids are too rebellious, he says. "A disciple is what you want."

And what they got. For years, Young insisted on being interviewed in tandem with Zazeela, who has the earthy directness of a native New Yorker. Now they are always joined by Jung Hee Choi, co-creator of the current *Dream House*, which uses her light-based sculpture and sine-wave drones. At times, she's an equal, and at times, she isn't; Young dominates the conversation, sometimes cuing her by saying, "You talk," and Choi prompts him with forgotten details.

A 45-year-old born in Seoul, Choi fled Korea's restrictive social norms and a father she calls "authoritative." (Arnold Dreyblatt uses the same word to describe Young.) When people asked why she came to the U.S., she says, "My metaphorical answer was, 'I come here to smoke pot.' Not literally."

Her discipleship requires extreme sub-

ordination. One day, Choi forgot to touch Young's feet, a sign of respect in Indian culture. "I threw my bag at her," Young says. "I think she was totally shocked." Yet her masters' frailties make her essential: "Initially, everything depended on us. Gradually, we're falling apart, and everything now is depending on her," he says.

So Choi is more than a disciple. "I am their mind-born child, and they're supposed to leave their souls to me when they leave this Earth."

"We will leave our souls to her. She will inherit our kingdom," Young says, which means, among other things, Choi will decide what music to release from his invaluable private archive of recordings. "We'll die, and she'll carry on. I can't see putting it any other way."

Young's grand ideas require big budgets, which they find in commissions and grants. "I get paid a lot of money," he told me in 2000. "You add zeros when you get me instead of the other composer."

For years, he had an indulgent patron in Dia, which spent \$4 million to convert the old Mercantile Exchange building into a customized palace. He and Zazeela moved there in 1979; Dia gave them 22 assistants and a yearly budget of \$500,000, which allowed Young to install a dedicated "beard sink," where he could wash his whiskers. But the Dia founders were more generous than prudent, and after they were deposed, the building was sold in 1985.

Ever since, Young and Zazeela have scrambled for money. She was bedridden for two years with an immune-system disorder, and he has been slowed by osteoarthritis and prostate surgery. "We don't have a penny saved," she says. According to tax documents, their Mela Foundation had income of almost \$1 million over the past three fiscal years, but their expenses nearly matched that, and they have assets of only about \$60,000. You can't expect practicality from a man who plays piano for six and a half hours.

WHEN HE WROTE *Trio for Strings*, Young was poor, living on mustard sandwiches. ("I bought the bread and stole the mustard," he said.) Once he finished the exposition section, he realized the piece was already an hour long, and when completed, would take two to three hours. "So I made the first and last compromise of my life—I shortened it."

On September 3, Young will finally present the uncompromised version of *Trio for Strings* at Dia. He considers it to be a world premiere. It took only 57 years to get it right. ■



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There was this one inmate who actually has a baby by one of the officers. They brought her to the segregation unit, and she had bruises on her body because another officer physically assaulted her. He spit on her from outside her holding cell. She's a problem inmate, but that didn't give him the right to hurt her and spit on her. If we spit on them, we would get another charge. So why are they allowed to do that to us if we can't do it back?

"THE FIRST TIME I MET MY DAUGHTER WAS IN THE VISITING CENTER."

"DANIEL" AND "ASHLEY," A RECENT INMATE AND HIS WIFE, BOTH IN THEIR LATE 20S (NOT THEIR REAL NAMES)

Daniel served six months in 2014 for leaving the scene of an accident, a misdemeanor.

DANIEL: I went to Rikers six months after my arrest. I was in central booking and then I got bailed out. \$40,000 bond. My family was able to post bail for me.

ASHLEY: If you don't have cash, they put you to Rikers and then you have to bail the inmate out there.

DANIEL: You don't pay the whole amount if it's cash.

ASHLEY: We paid \$25,000 cash.

DANIEL: As long as you go to all your court dates, you get it back.

ASHLEY: I was four months pregnant when he went into Rikers.

DANIEL: They check to see if you have drugs in your system and then you have to go through a medical screening. You're sitting in a holding cell with 20 other guys. In a place where people that are leaving and people that are coming in are across from each other. The guys leaving are making fun of the guys coming in. Guys are coming up with sports involving throwing garbage around because you're there for like 12 hours. No one seems particularly in shock. No one is sitting there crying or anything.

In the short-term dorm, there were fights constantly. The saddest thing was the guy whose girlfriend from like ten years broke up with him over the phone. He had her tattoo on his arm. All the guys around him started telling their stories about how they got dumped the first time they were arrested.

In the long-term dorm, I got lucky: I found a bed by the window right off the bat. I didn't have a pillow for a few days. The guy that worked in the clothes box, he ran the house, a guy named Buddha, but I paid him a couple of bags of chips for a pillow.

ASHLEY: I came to visit after four days. You can come twice a week for an hour. And after two months, I figured out if you come from out of state, you get extended visits for two hours. So I pretended that I lived in Philadelphia with his grandmother. The COs knew it was lie. Everyone did.

They liked me. From the first time, I was like, *I'm gonna kiss their asses, and no matter how they treat me, I'm still going to stay super-nice.* You have to laugh at their racist jokes.

DANIEL: For visits, there was a gymnasium, and they bring the inmates up in shifts. Someone from the visiting center shows up,

gets everyone that has visits that day, walks with you down to the changing area, and you change into different clothes. We wore, like, green jumpsuits when we're in the building. And then we wear gray ones when we're on the visiting floor. They call it the dance floor. 'Cause you're going to meet your girl there. And all the girls are on one side, all the guys are on the other, so it's like a seventh-grade dance. The first time I met [my daughter] was in the visiting center.

ASHLEY: I was in a lot of pain because of the C-section. She was 7 days old. And I was stressed and nervous. And the first thing the CO said to me is, "You're an irresponsible mom. Moms like you shouldn't have kids." And then the door opens and I see my husband and he walks over to us. If the child is under 2 years old, the inmate is allowed for his whole visit to hold the child. She gave him the first smile in her life.

DANIEL: There were somewhere between like three and six white guys [in my unit]. Out of 60. So not many. There was one time I saw a statistic on Wikipedia where like the percentage of people that get raped in prison happens to be the exact same percentage as the percentage of white guys in prison. That got me worried. But other than that, I wasn't concerned at all. One thing as a white guy, it really sucks that they don't allow you to have sunscreen. I got burnt every single day.

ASHLEY: I think the real inmates at Rikers are the COs, because they have a lifelong sentence, you know? One of the COs told me his entire childhood he spent waiting for his dad to get out of prison. He would get out of prison and go back. And now the guy is a CO in jail. So I was like, "Why would you do that?" And he said, "Well, it's good health benefits." I'm like, "Really?" And he said, "Yeah, you have to feed your children, right?" ■

Ponte

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 39

deficit with cameras. There are facilities that should be torn down and rebuilt, either on Rikers or on some other location.

The city has decided not to renew Corizon's contract as health provider. What makes you think that HHC can do better? With HHC, a lot of the care for inmates in the community transfers back to us when the inmate comes into custody and when the inmate's released from custody, so we think there'll be some benefit to the continuity of care. We get to build a health-care system knowing what the deficiencies have been.

We're really trying to rewire the culture to say, okay, everybody's responsible for health care—it's not just the nurse. Everybody's responsible for security. Everybody's responsible for safety. **You've done a lot of shaking up of the department's leadership. Has there been a lot of turnover?**

Yes. Probably nearly 100 percent. You couldn't take any part of this organization and say, "Boy, that's running really well." Somebody goes to NYPD and fails, and they come to us and we hire them. We'll change that. You can't make it in the NYPD, you can't make it in New York City Department of Correction.

We just started having exit interviews of people about why they're leaving, to

get a handle on retention. Because after 15½ weeks of training, that's a big investment to have you walk out the door in six months or a year.

As far as your staff goes at the department, you can turn over 100 percent.

You don't have that kind of discretion with the COs because their jobs are relatively well protected by the union. So how long will it take before you have enough fresh blood in the CO ranks to change the culture?

New York City Correction—probably 15 years ago—nationally, was a model people wanted to copy. People who are retired are calling and saying, "I'm tired of reading that stuff in the paper, what can we do to get us back to where we used to be?" ■

The Rewriting of David Foster Wallace



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 81

as the product of two separate brains. In fact, the projects have a lot of overlap, which has brought its own complications. When D.T. Max revealed in his 2012 biography *Every Love Story Is a Ghost Story* that some facts were fudged and characters made composite in the famous cruise-ship and Illinois State Fair essays, many said, “Oh, so that’s why they ran in *Harper’s* rather than *The New Yorker*. They wouldn’t pass the fact-checkers.” But as Thomas Kunkel’s new biography of Joseph Mitchell has shown, Wallace wasn’t up to anything new or all that criminal—as a nonfiction writer, he wasn’t right for *The New Yorker* mostly because he wasn’t a creature of anyone’s house style. What distinguishes Wallace’s journalism is not all that different from what distinguished his omnivorous, polymath fiction, which is probably one reason journalists liked it so much. Wallace called it his “giant floating eyeball” method, and if you look around, you can still see its traces everywhere, especially since the vogue for “longform” has taken hold. See, for example, the opening of Leslie Jamison’s recent essay on Sri Lanka for *Afar* and its echoes of Wallace’s cruise-ship essay. Here’s Wallace’s first paragraph:

I have now seen sucrose beaches and water a very bright blue. I have seen an all-red leisure suit with flared lapels. I have smelled suntan lotion spread over 2,100 pounds of hot flesh. I have been addressed as ‘Mon’ in three different nations. I have seen 500 upscale Americans dance the Electric Slide. I have seen sunsets that looked computer-enhanced. I have (very briefly) joined a conga line.

Here, in part, is Jamison’s:

I have whale-watched in the rain, or whale-sought in the rain, while our boat hit waves as tall as houses and their spray left me storm-drenched and salt-soaked and blinking against the sting. I’ve watched a Chinese woman sit beside me at the prow, clenching the railing with one hand and a plastic baggie of her own vomit with the other, undeterred, scanning the horizon for unseen blowholes ... I’ve eaten mangoes sweet as candy, licked the orange stain around my mouth after sucking their pits for the last flesh.

It’s a fairly simple rhetorical trick, the comic laundry list of the traveler’s experi-

ences, but it also calls attention to the writer’s powers of observation and establishes that the writer’s voice, rather than the subject matter, will be the star of the show. But it brings with it the risk of seducing the reader into loving the narrator and loathing the people described. Wallace called this “the Asshole Problem.” In a letter to a student who pointed out that the chubby Midwesterners in his State Fair essay seemed “animal-like,” he answered, ashamedly, “It’s death if the biggest sense the reader gets from a critical essay is that the narrator’s a very critical person, or from a comic essay that the narrator’s cruel or snooty. Hence the importance of being just as critical about oneself as one is about the stuff/people one’s being critical of.”

Reviewing Wallace’s 2012 posthumous collection of essays *Both Flesh and Not*, Gideon Lewis-Kraus argued that Wallace had taught the generation of journalists who came after him—writers like Jamison, Elif Batuman, John Jeremiah Sullivan, Tom Bissell, and Wells Tower—to “perform the overcoming of contempt.”

But there’s no version of this formula without contempt as an essential element. A large part of Wallace’s appeal, for me anyway, was that you could always tell that he *was* kind of an asshole, showering contempt on everyone, not just himself. Banning contempt entirely may be a good way to live, but it’s another kind of death for writing. Which is one reason it’s worth remembering, as the image of Wallace as slacker saint and liberal sage hardens into Hemingwayesque concrete, that he was a Reagan voter and a Perot supporter; a jealous guy who once contemplated buying a gun to knock off a woman’s husband; and a person who put to paper both the notion that the “good thing” about 9/11 was that it brought Americans together, and that “AIDS’s gift to us lies in its loud reminder that there’s nothing casual about sex at all.” Wallace never wanted that piece republished in a collection—in fact, he wanted it forgotten. He’d probably be the last person to argue for his own sainthood.

None of these arguments would be worth rehashing if the dead man’s sentences, written in what he liked to call “U.S. English,” weren’t still so gloriously alive. There was something in him that could absorb American language in all its registers and compound it into a voice that in its every deployment said more about the country than whatever Wallace himself happened to be saying. One of the most frequently aired complaints about Wallace was that he was a show-off, that his own voice drowned out those of his characters, that there was something self-indulgent about his massive forays into antic cultural comedy. But I think

he knew, having the self he had, the only thing to do with it was to put it to work, like crippled Hephaestus, hammering together his warped and magnificent books.

THERE WILL ALWAYS be readers who look to novels and novelists for instruction on how to lead their lives. Wallace, foremost among his contemporaries, seems especially to attract these readers (whatever the other pleasures to be had from his books). He courted them with bromides about brains beating like hearts, literature as a salve for loneliness, and novels comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable, etc. And so it’s easy now to find online documents like this:

My name is infinitedetox and I am an addict.

Some time around May, 2004, I willfully entered into a relationship with pharmaceutical opiates. It began as a sort of experiment, quickly escalated into a recreation, and from there vectored toward present-day dependency on a straight line whose slope was gradual, but unwavering.

In December of last year it became apparent that this line would never flatten out or stabilize on its own, that it would just keep trundling on upwards, tending toward infinity given infinite time. This is when I started to get scared.

David Foster Wallace had just passed away and I decided to re-read *Infinite Jest* over the holidays, and something difficult to explain happened ... Somehow the book—and now brace yourself for one of those clichés that Wallace seems so interested in *IJ*—made me want to be a better person.

I confess that this chunklet of text makes me sad, but the thing I do like about it is that in the way it vectors into the language of geometry, you can tell that here’s someone who’s internalized a little bit of the Wallace prose style.

The same could be said for *The End of the Tour*, assembled in part from his actual speech. On the festival circuit, the movie has garnered glowing reviews, and, whatever its complicity in softening Wallace so he’s easier to chew, it’s certainly in a league with films like *The Theory of Everything* and *Dallas Buyers Club*, essentially high-gloss true-story after-school specials for adults. Segel does a creditable impression of Wallace; you can tell he’s done his homework, watched the extant video. His innovation is to turn Wallace’s frequent wincing into the beginning of a snarl, signaling bottled rage or torment. This is the film’s version of the Asshole Problem, of Wallace’s tilting on the prickly-cuddly axis. Segel’s Wallace says he can’t stand the “enormous hiss of egos” in New York and he doesn’t want to be a guy at book parties saying, “I’m a writer! I’m a writer!” He asks, “What if I become this parody of that very thing?” Too late now. ■

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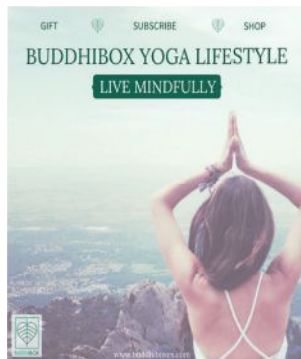


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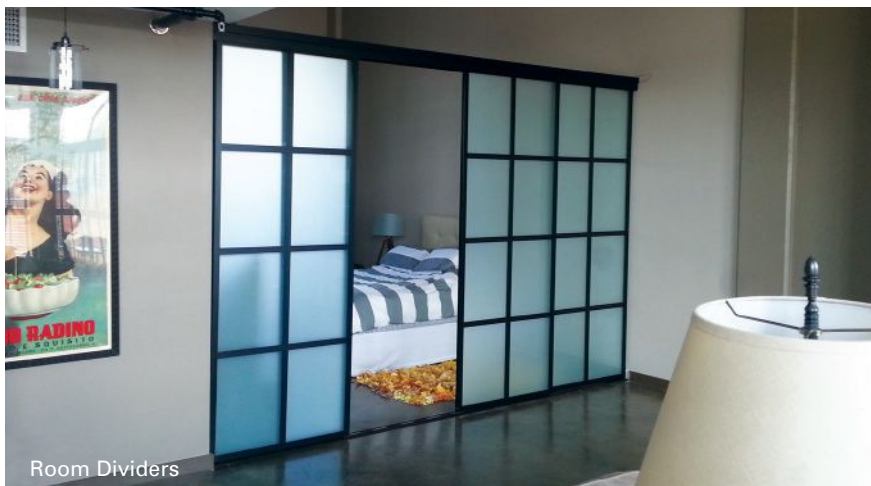
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1 Skin layer
7 "Mamma Mia!" pop group
11 Discreet summons
15 YouTube offering
19 Fictional Plaza Hotel imp
20 Simon, creator of Oscar and
Felix
21 ____ mater
22 Ascend
23 Wear to eat?
25 Mixture in many French
sauces
26 Competent
27 Map detail
28 "Zip- ____ -Doo-Dah"
29 Wear to eat?
31 Be in accord
33 Huge Brit. lexicon
34 Major putdowns
35 Wear to eat?
40 Café lightener
43 Counting everything
44 Solid downpour
45 "____ Lee" (Poe poem)
49 ____ Lee (comic-book writer)
50 Spearheaded
52 Wear to eat?

55 Like Spanish roofs, often
57 Overnight drops
59 Sphere head?
60 Pond organism
61 Infrequently
63 Fruit with custardy flesh
67 Attaches, as some patches
69 Wear to eat?
72 ChapStick or Blistex
76 Renée of silents
77 Filmdom's Martin and
Charlie
82 Butter sub
83 Pet-food brand
85 Snitch
87 Golfer Palmer, familiarly
88 Wear to eat?
93 Pen point
95 "Picnic" playwright
96 Feels indignant about
97 Darth's daughter
99 Delivered from danger
101 Part of PDA
102 Wear to eat?
104 Keys in seas
108 There's something in the way
she moos?
109 Grasslike marsh plant

110 Wear to eat?
114 Digital-camera mode
115 Cell-phone giant
120 Tibetan priest
121 Land of Shiraz
122 What to do with wear
to eat?
124 Suffix with sinus
125 Hardly a jock
126 Olympics gymnast Korbut
127 "Gangsta's Paradise" rapper
128 "Our Gang" pup
129 Catch a glimpse of
130 Sought damages
131 Gofer's task

1 “Entourage” actress Mazar
2 North Carolina campus
3 Competes at Henley
4 Tick’s tiny cousin
5 “Visually fun, but ...
6 museum worthy?”
7 Witness
8 Ancient head garland
9 Implore
10 Take the bait
Menu phrase

11 Whittled (down)
 12 Trudge
 13 Cockily self-satisfied
 14 Airport limo alternative
 15 Rush-hour pace
 16 Columbus Day baby's sign
 17 Faith with Five Pillars
 18 Friends, slangily
 24 Let a con out of the can early
 29 Reims's river ("elves"
 anagram)
 30 Cornerstone abbr.
 32 Desired outcome
 33 TV boy from Mayberry
 35 Fine sprays
 36 Set free, in a way
 37 Play for time
 38 Sharpened
 39 Contented sigh
 40 Hold up
 41 Word-finding deficit
 42 Tips off
 46 Dietary-fiber source
 47 Morays and congers
 48 Italia's Garda or Como, e.g.
 51 Captain Sparrow portrayer
 53 Howard Cosell was once one
 54 Veep before Al
 56 "David Copperfield" wife
 58 "The ____ Cannonball"
 62 Disparages
 64 Joined at the chuppah
 65 Whiz
 66 Departure's opp.
 68 Govt. workplace watchdog
 70 Slangy savvy
 71 Archie: Carroll :: Edith: ____
 72 Home builder's buy
 73 A.J. Soprano portrayer
 Robert
 74 Ending meaning "foot"
 75 Physiques, in muscle mags
 78 Author Jong
 79 Listlessness
 80 Bruce who played Watson
 81 Begonias' beginnings
 84 It's square-rigged on a brig
 86 Fed up with
 89 Bread baker's need
 90 Completely hunky-dory
 91 "Want Whiskas now!"
 92 Bro or sis
 94 The Titanic's undoing
 98 Mitigate
 100 Speaker with a booming voice
 103 Foursome
 104 Long Island South Shore
 town
 105 Do toe loops and lutzes
 106 Restrict
 107 Rub out
 108 Dum Dums and Dots
 111 Trigonometric ratio
 112 Uno + dos
 113 Tombstone lawman
 114 Human-rights org.
 116 It may be fishy
 117 Caffeine-rich kind of nut
 118 "Checkmate!"
 119 "And giving ____, up the
 chimney ..."
 122 Song from 7-Across
 123 Rub out

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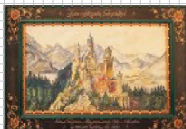
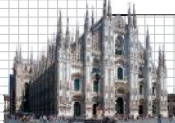
Our deliberately oversimplified guide to who falls where on our taste hierarchies.

HIGHBROW

Study says the dosages in pot edibles are all over the place. **Nibble with caution, dude.**



A trio of tourists **crashed their drone** into the roof of Milan Cathedral.



It's springtime for Hitler's auction prices: One of his paintings **sold for more than \$113,000** (reportedly to a Chinese buyer).



Bloody backlash to the *Game of Thrones* finale. Ah, the many-faced gods of superfandom.



The State Department's visa-processing computer system failed. **So did its backup.**

Court filings reveal that Dov Charney may be **even more disgusting** than you thought he was.



Bird flu causes egg shortage and **soaring prices.**



Why do the men's Fashion Week banners look like **ads for TJ Maxx?**



Pope Francis says weapons manufacturers shouldn't **call themselves Christians.**



The 33-year-old mayor of South Bend, Indiana, publishes **an eloquent coming-out essay.**



6-3. (Still, gotta love Scalia's dissent.)



Stonewall Inn gets landmarked.

L.G. to reduce height of HQ, preserving the **Palisades'** prehistoric view.

Season two of *Teen Vogue's* cheerful **Strictly Ballet** web series spotlights the diverse young dancers of Miami City Ballet.



Blanca Li's **adorable dancing robots** at BAM. They fall down, but they get back up again!

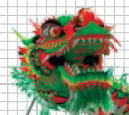
Plus "Pepper," SoftBank Robotics' four-foot-tall robotic companion, **sold out its first production run** in less than a minute.



Nevet Yitzhak's digital versions of Afghan rug designs at Yossi Milo.



Dora Budor's mysterious industrial miniature abstractions at Swiss Institute.



Bill de Blasio adds the **Lunar New Year** to the school calendar, allowing families to celebrate without tarnishing attendance records.

DESPICABLE



The owners of the beleaguered Prospect Park Residence nursing home **won't run the A/C.**

A bet's a bet: **Pete Rose did in fact gamble** on Reds games, so he's still banned from baseball.



Upper West Side co-op demands pups be DNA-tested, is accused of **"dog racism."**

Holey Donuts—supposed to be a healthier option—**goes bankrupt.**



Plus: China's annual dog-meat festival has a theme: **"We are also dog lovers!"** Preferably with fries.

The Watcher. (Heck of a movie script, though.)



The agriculture commissioner of Texas, Sid Miller, won his battle to get **deep-fryers in public schools.**



The run on soon-to-be-discontinued **Confederate-flag merch.**

BRILLIANT



Beck's happy, happy new song **"Dreams."**

The **Friday-night street party** featuring Matt Vorzimer on Delancey had homeless men dancing with Alvin Ailey students.



Kanye West explains that his obnoxiousness can be traced to **his search for awesomeness.**



Instagram 7.0 will help you **waste even more time.**

Happy 100th anniversary, BMT Fourth Avenue line! That 1915 train should be arriving **any minute now.**



Gmail adds **"undo send" option.** Breathalyzer not included.



Researchers at William & Mary and the University of Maryland say that eating fermented foods like **kimchee and sauerkraut** correlates with lowered anxiety.

Brooklyn **blues singer Ida Blue's** come-hither vocal stylings at Rockwood Music Hall.



Barclays Center's **grass roof.**



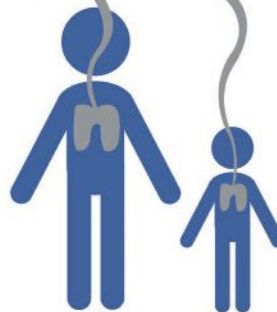
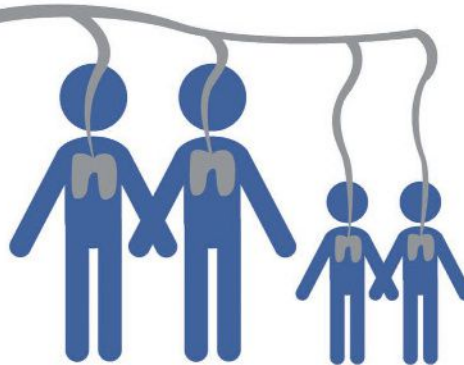
Fresh Dressed, a documentary about hip-hop street fashion.

LOWBROW

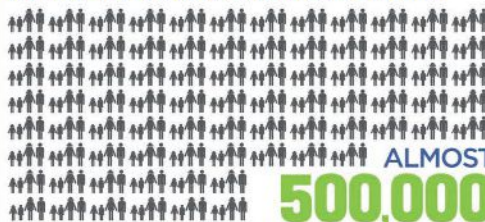
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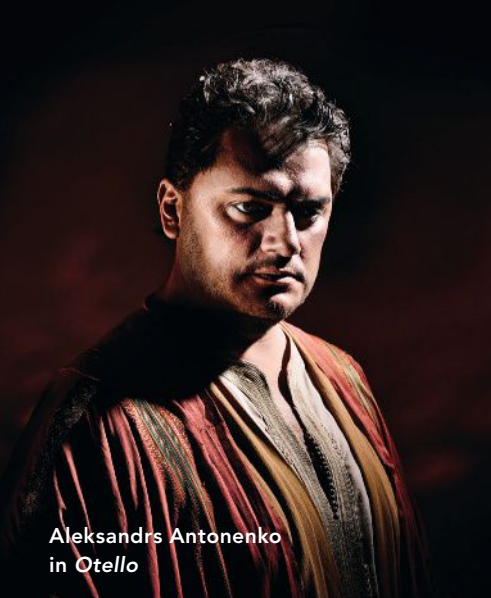
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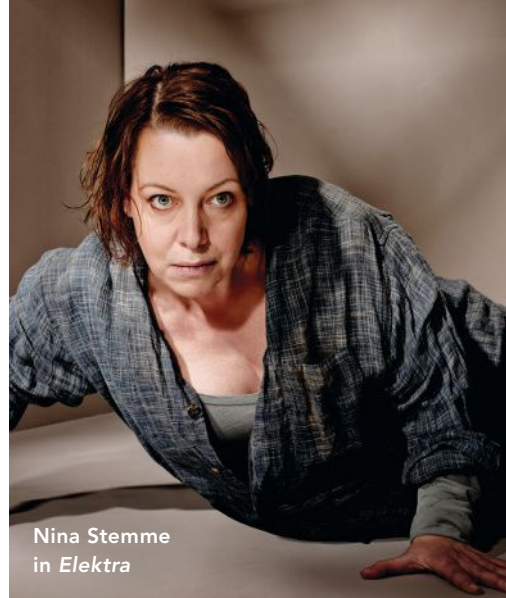
Public Health Solutions



Aleksandrs Antonenko
in *Otello*



Marlis Petersen
in *Lulu*



Nina Stemme
in *Elektra*

The Metropolitan Opera

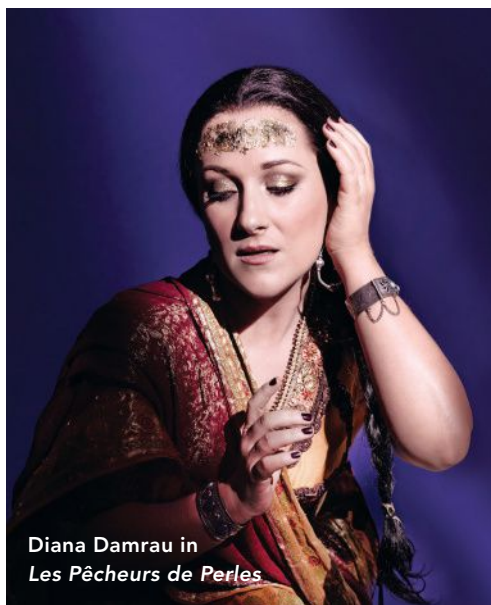
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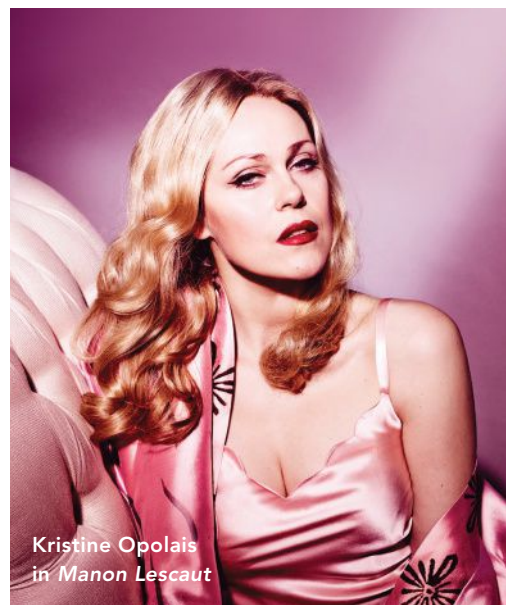
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